

# हिन्दुस्तान

## अब बस

अभी चंद रोज पहले ही जब हैदराबाद की एक बेटी से न सिर्फ दुष्कर्म किया गया, बल्कि उसके बाद पूरी पाशविकता दिखाते हुए उसे जला भी दिया गया था, तो समाज की मानसिकता, पुलिस और कानूनों के बारे में बहुत कुछ कहा गया था। तरह-तरह के बयान और संकल्प भी सुनाई पड़े थे। लेकिन एक सप्ताह के भीतर ही जिस तरह से उत्तर प्रदेश के उन्नाव में एक बलात्कार पीड़िता को जला दिया गया, वह बताता है कि वास्तव में हो-हल्ले से आगे हम कुछ कर नहीं पा रहे हैं। कम से कम ऐसा कुछ तो नहीं हो रहा, जिससे दुष्कर्मियों और महिलाओं के खिलाफ हिंसा करने वालों के मन में कोई डर पैदा हो। हैदराबाद की घटना ने जो सवाल उठाए थे, उनसे आगे जाकर उन्नाव की घटना ने कुछ दूसरे सवाल उठाए हैं। हैदराबाद की घटना में हम पीड़िता को समय रहते नहीं बचा सके थे, जबकि उन्नाव की पीड़िता बलात्कारियों के चंगुल से मुक्त होने में कामयाब रही थी और पांच में से तीन दुष्कर्मी पकड़े भी गए थे। लेकिन वे जमानत लेकर बाहर आ गए और फिर उन्होंने पीड़िता को पकड़कर सरेआम आग के हवाले कर दिया। इस घटना ने यह बताया है कि दुष्कर्म पीड़िता की मदद के लिए

सख्त कानून बनाने और तमाम प्रावधान करने की बातें भले ही कितनी की जाएं, अभी भी हम न तो उन्हें पूर्ण सुरक्षा देने की हालत में हैं और न ही अपराधियों को उन्हें आगे और नुकसान पहुंचाने से रोकने की स्थिति में हैं।

दिल्ली के निर्भया कांड के बाद जब दुष्कर्म से जुड़े कानूनों को कड़ा बनाने की कोशिश की जा रही थी, तब यह मांग काफी जोर-शोर से उठी थी कि दुष्कर्म के लिए सजा

के तौर पर मृत्युदंड का प्रावधान किया जाए। उस समय कुछ लोगों ने यह तर्क दिया था कि इससे अपराधी दुष्कर्म के बाद हत्या करने की कोशिश भी कर सकता है। यह डर अब सच में बदलता दिखने लगा है। हालांकि मृत्युदंड वाले प्रावधान को इसलिए जरूरी माना गया था, ताकि यह स्थापित हो कि दुष्कर्म सबसे बड़ा अपराध है और इसके लिए सबसे बड़ी सजा जरूरी है। लेकिन उन्नाव की दर्दनाक घटना ने बताया है कि इसके साथ ही कुछ और एहतियाती उपाय करने की भी जरूरत थी, जो नहीं किए गए। क्या ऐसा नहीं हो सकता कि बलात्कार पीड़िता को हर समय सुरक्षा देने का प्रावधान किया जाए ? खासकर तब तक, जब तक कि उस पर खतरा मंडरा रहा है। इसके साथ ही ऐसी व्यवस्था भी जरूरी है कि दुष्कर्म के आरोपी आसानी से जमानत पर या पेरोल लेकर बाहर न आ पाएं। उनकी जमानत या पेरोल पर पूरी तरह से रोक भी लगाई जा सकती है।

हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद यह कहा गया था कि बलात्कार जैसे अपराधों पर अंतिम रूप से रोक समाज की सोच बदलकर और महिलाओं को पुरुषों के बराबर दर्जा देकर ही लगाई जा सकती है, सिर्फ कानून में बदलाव करने भर से कुछ नहीं होगा। लेकिन यह भी सच है कि यह रास्ता लंबा है और इसके लिए जिन प्रयासों को लगातार करना होगा, वे अभी हमने शुरू भी नहीं किए। लेकिन उन्नाव की घटना ने बताया है कि अभी भी दुष्कर्म के अपराध से निपटने के लिए हमारे पास जो कानून हैं और जो व्यवस्थाएं हैं, वे पूरी तरह से पीड़िता के पक्ष में नहीं हैं, आपराधिक प्रवृत्तियों के लिए अभी भी वह गुंजाइश है कि वे पीड़िता को नुकसान पहुंचा सकें या उसकी जान तक ले सकें।

### विदेशी अखबार से

## बाल विवाह में कमी के बावजूद

यूनिसेफ की एक हालिया रिपोर्ट से पता चलता है कि 25 साल पहले की तुलना में आज दक्षिण एशिया में बाल विवाहों की संख्या आधी हो गई है। बेशक, सामाजिक कार्यक्रमों और गैर-सरकारी संगठनों की जमीनी कोशिशों के साथ-साथ सांसदों, विशेष रूप से महिला राजनेताओं ने इस मोर्चे पर अच्छे काम किए हैं। समाज में बहुत जरूरी बदलाव हुए हैं। इस तरह के लाभ के बावजूद देश के कई हिस्सों में बाल विवाह की कुप्रथा जारी है, जिससे बच्चों का जीवन और भविष्य खतरे में है। अभी हाल ही में दो लड़कियों की दर्दनाक तस्वीरें सोशल मीडिया पर वायरल हो रही थीं। यह दावा किया जा रहा था कि सिंध में एक व्यक्तिगत विवाद को निपटाने के लिए लड़कियों का आदान-प्रदान किया गया था। कम उम्र की हिंदू लड़कियों का जबरन धर्म-परिवर्तन की घटनाएं भी सामने आई हैं, जो बाल विवाह निरोधक कानून का भी पूर्ण उल्लंघन है। सिंध प्रांत को श्रेय देना चाहिए, जिसने विवाह की आयु को सफलतापूर्वक बढ़ाकर 18 कर

दिया है, जबकि अन्य प्रांत किसी न किसी बहाने देरी करते रहे हैं। पंजाब प्रांत ने मौजूदा औपनिवेशिक युग के कानून में संशोधन की पेशकश की है, लेकिन अभी भी लड़कियों की शादी की उम्र 16 से बढ़ाकर 18 नहीं की गई है। धार्मिक समूहों और रूढ़िवादी राजनेताओं के कारण किसी भी मुद्दे पर कानून बनाना आसान नहीं होता है। यह इस तथ्य के बावजूद है कि पाकिस्तान बाल अधिकार घोषणापत्र पर हस्ताक्षर कर चुका है, जिसके अनुसार, 18 वर्ष से कम उम्र वालों का वर्गीकरण बच्चे के रूप में ही किया जाएगा।

बाल विवाह एक गहरी हानिकारक प्रथा है, जो लड़कियों पर बहुत दुष्प्रभाव डालती है। बाल विवाह एक तरह से दासता मंजूर करने जैसा है। विवाह की आड़ में बाल बलात्कार को वैध बना दिया जाता है। मानसिक और शारीरिक क्षमता विकसित होने से पहले ही वे घरेलू काम व जिम्मेदारियों के अधीन हो जाती हैं। उन्हें बौद्ध के रूप में देखा जाता है, गरीबी से बचने के लिए जल्दी शादी कर दी जाती है। वयस्क पुरुष उनका इस्तेमाल अपनी संपत्ति की तरह करते हैं।

### डॉन, पाकिस्तान

बाल विवाह एक गहरी हानिकारक प्रथा है, जो लड़कियों पर बहुत दुष्प्रभाव डालती है। बाल विवाह एक तरह से दासता मंजूर करने जैसा है। विवाह की आड़ में बाल बलात्कार को वैध बना दिया जाता है। मानसिक और शारीरिक क्षमता विकसित होने से पहले ही वे घरेलू काम व जिम्मेदारियों के अधीन हो जाती हैं। उन्हें बौद्ध के रूप में देखा जाता है, गरीबी से बचने के लिए जल्दी शादी कर दी जाती है। वयस्क पुरुष उनका इस्तेमाल अपनी संपत्ति की तरह करते हैं।

### 79 साल पहले

8 दिसंबर, 1940 को प्रकाशित

# निरंतर बढ़ रही है जिनकी प्रासंगिकता

## बाबा साहब भीमराव आंबेडकर देश के उन नेताओं में हैं, जिनकी प्रासंगिकता आजादी के बाद से लगातार बढ़ रही है। निर्वाण दिवस पर विशेष-

यह 1950 की बात है, जब बाबा साहब आंबेडकर ने भविष्य के भारत को एक चेतावनी दी थी। उन्होंने कहा था कि हमें केवल 'राजनीतिक लोकतंत्र मिल भर जाने से खुश नहीं हो जाना चाहिए, क्योंकि भले विदेशी सत्ता हमारे देश से चली गई हो, लेकिन हमारा समाज अभी भी असमानताओं और भेदभावों (हायरार्की) से अट्ठा पड़ा है। यह देश 26 जनवरी, 1950 को जब गणतंत्र के तौर पर एक नई पारी की शुरुआत करेगा, तब इस पारी की



### नशतर

## नए शतकवीर का प्रताप

**प्याज हमारी राजनीति का ही प्रतीक है, इसकी बनावट में छिलकों का गठबंधन होता है।**

मार्केट में प्याज की गांठ की रेंद आम आदमी की गांठ से बाहर निकल चुकी है। सब्जी मंडी में प्रतिस्पर्द्धा का विचित्र वातावरण निर्मित है। प्याज के भाव से सदैव ईर्ष्या रखने वाले लाल टमाटर ने भी तेवर दिखाने शुरू कर दिए थे। बाकी की साग-सब्जियां भी कसमसा रही थीं। मगर कोई भी प्याज को टक्कर नहीं दे पाया है।

उधर प्याज की देखा-देखी दूसरे किसम के खाद्यान भी बाजार भाव के इस मैदान ने फांदे पड़े हैं। कभी सोना-चांदी के भाव बलियोंां उछलने लग जाया करते हैं, कभी कच्चा तेल खेल करने लग जाता है। यूं भी पेट्रोलियम और प्याज सहोदर हैं। ये दोनों ही जमीन के नीचे से निकालने पड़ते हैं। भले ही बाहर आकर एक को रिफाइनरी की गोद में डाल दिया जाता है और दूसरे को खाद्य तेलों की कड़ही में उबलना पड़ता है।

इन दिनों व्याज दरों में घटोती और प्याज की दरों में

### साइबर संसार

## फिर तेरी कहानी याद आई

शशि कपूर पिछली सदी के तीन दशकों तक हिंदी सिनेमा के सबसे लोकप्रिय नायकों में एक रहे। उनके पास व्यावसायिक फिल्मों की भाषा-शैली की समझ थी और उसे भुनाने वाला मैनरिज्म भी। परदे पर अपनी आत्मीय उपस्थिति, मासूम हंसी, चेहरे को तिरछा घुमाने के ख़ास अंदाज़ ने युवाओं में उनके लिए फ़्रेज पैदा किया था। उनका एक और चेहरा भी था, जिसे उनके पिता ने बचपन से उन्हें थिएटर से जोड़कर रचा और जिसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय थिएटर ग्रुप 'शेक्सपियराना' के एक सदस्य के तौर पर दुनिया भर की यात्राओं ने तराशा था। इन्हीं यात्राओं के दौरान जेनिफर से उन्हें प्रेम हुआ और मात्र 20 वर्ष की उम्र में शादी कर ली। पिता के देहांत के बाद शशि कपूर ने 'पृथ्वी थिएटर' का पुनरोद्धार किया और नाटककारों को मंच देने की कोशिश की। 1978 में उनके होम प्रोडक्शन 'फ़िल्मवालाज' की शुरुआत ने हिंदी के सार्थक सिनेमा को विस्तार देने में बड़ी भूमिका निभाई। *उत्सव*, *जुनून*, *कलयुग* और *36 चौरंगी लैन* सार्थक हिंदी सिनेमा की उपलब्धियां मानी जाती हैं। अभिव्यक्ति के नए-नए रास्ते तलाशता यह बेचैन अभिनेता 1984 में कैसर से पत्नी जेनिफर की मृत्यु के बाद अकेला पड़ गया था। इस अकेलेपन और अनियमित जीवन शैली ने उन्हें बीमार किया और उनकी मौत की वजह भी बनी।

### शशि कपूर के पास व्यावसायिक फिल्मों की समझ थी और उसे भुनाने वाला मैनरिज्म भी।

शशि कपूर पिछली सदी के तीन दशकों तक हिंदी सिनेमा के सबसे लोकप्रिय नायकों में एक रहे। उनके पास व्यावसायिक फिल्मों की भाषा-शैली की समझ थी और उसे भुनाने वाला मैनरिज्म भी। परदे पर अपनी आत्मीय उपस्थिति, मासूम हंसी, चेहरे को तिरछा घुमाने के ख़ास अंदाज़ ने युवाओं में उनके लिए फ़्रेज पैदा किया था। उनका एक और चेहरा भी था, जिसे उनके पिता ने बचपन से उन्हें थिएटर से जोड़कर रचा और जिसे अंतरराष्ट्रीय थिएटर ग्रुप 'शेक्सपियराना' के एक सदस्य के तौर पर दुनिया भर की यात्राओं ने तराशा था। इन्हीं यात्राओं के दौरान जेनिफर से उन्हें प्रेम हुआ और मात्र 20 वर्ष की उम्र में शादी कर ली। पिता के देहांत के बाद शशि कपूर ने 'पृथ्वी थिएटर' का पुनरोद्धार किया और नाटककारों को मंच देने की कोशिश की। 1978 में उनके होम प्रोडक्शन 'फ़िल्मवालाज' की शुरुआत ने हिंदी के सार्थक सिनेमा को विस्तार देने में बड़ी भूमिका निभाई। *उत्सव*, *जुनून*, *कलयुग* और *36 चौरंगी लैन* सार्थक हिंदी सिनेमा की उपलब्धियां मानी जाती हैं। अभिव्यक्ति के नए-नए रास्ते तलाशता यह बेचैन अभिनेता 1984 में कैसर से पत्नी जेनिफर की मृत्यु के बाद अकेला पड़ गया था। इस अकेलेपन और अनियमित जीवन शैली ने उन्हें बीमार किया और उनकी मौत की वजह भी बनी।

<b>ध्रुव गुप्त</b> की फेसबुक वॉल से	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

नींव एक अंतर्द्वंद पर रखी गई होगी, जहां राजनीतिक समानता तो होगी, लेकिन समाजिक व आर्थिक बराबरी नहीं होगी।' इस आर्थिक और सामाजिक बराबरी से जब तक हम दूर रहेंगे, बाबा साहब आंबेडकर हमारे लिए प्रासंगिक बने रहेंगे। उससे कहीं ज्यादा, जितने वह आजादी की लड़ाई में प्रासंगिक थे।

आज 2019 में, जब भारत विक्रम लैंड के जरिए चांद को छूने की संभावनाएं तलाश रहा है, तब इसी गणतंत्र में हर महीने दलित समुदाय से आने वाले कई लोगों को सीवर की सफाई करते वक्त अपनी जान गंवानी पड़ती है। सिर्फ साल 2019 के शुरुआती छह महीनों में 50 से अधिक दलित सीवर में मौत का शिकार हो चुके हैं। मैग्सेसे पुरस्कार से नवाजे गए सफाई कर्मचारी आंदोलन के अध्यक्ष बेजवाड़ा विल्सन का असलान है कि अभी भी लाखों लोग आधुनिक भारत में सिर पर मैला ढोने को मजबूर हैं। इन दोनों ही तरह के मामलों में न किसी तकनीक को विकसित करने के लिए बड़ा अभियान या बड़ा निवेश शुरू किया गया है, और न ही इस अभिशाप से मुक्ति की कोई बेवैनी ही कहीं दिखाई देती है। अगर इतना ही काफी नहीं है, तो एक बार हमें तीन साल पहले की उमा (गुजरात) की उस घटना को भी याद कर लेना चाहिए, जो बताती है कि समाज में जातिगत हिंसा और प्रताड़ना आज

<b>नजरिया</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>एक संकट टालने की कोशिश में बढ़े दूसरे की ओर</b>	
<b>असम में सिटीजन रजिस्टर के साथ जो समस्या शुरू हुई थी, नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक से जटिल हो सकती है।</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>सुदीप चक्रवर्ती</b> <p><b>वरिष्ठ पत्रकार</b></p>	
<span></span>	
जब नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक को संसद में पेश करने की तैयारी तेज हो गई है, तब राष्ट्रवादी बयानबाजी का दौर चल पड़ा है। दरअसल, नई दिल्ली स्थित इंद्रप्रस्थ विश्व संवाद केंद्र के सीईओ ने इस सप्ताह के शुरू में एक राष्ट्रीय दैनिक में प्रकाशित अपनी टिप्पणी में अजीब वाक्यांश का इस्तेमाल किया था। उन्होंने पूर्वोत्तर भारत में नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक संबंधी चिंताओं पर गौर नहीं किया था, जबकि मणिपुर, नगालैंड, मिजोरम और मेघालय ने प्रस्तावित विधेयक का लगातार विरोध किया है। विश्व संवाद केंद्र दूसरे कुछ संगठनों की तरह ही अपने राष्ट्रवादी एजेंडे को एक राष्ट्रीय एजेंडे के रूप में आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश में है। इस वर्ष की शुरुआत में जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेतृत्व वाली राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन सरकार ने इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक को आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश की थी, तब इस विधेयक को लेकर चिंताएं बढ़ गई थीं। इस विधेयक को राह देने से पूर्वोत्तर भारत में संतुलन बुरी तरह बिगड़ सकता है। आगे उस भाजपा की छवि पर भी असर पड़ सकता है, जो सबको साथ लेकर चलने और सबके विकास की बात करती रही है।	
नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक 2019 इसी साल जनवरी में लोकसभा में पारित हो गया था। नागरिकता अधिनियम 1955 को संशोधित करने जा रहे इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक के अनुसार, अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय के लोगों, जैसे हिंदुओं, सिखों, बौद्धों, जैनियों, पारसियों, ईसाईयों को अवैध शरणार्थी के रूप में नहीं देखा जाएगा... और ऐसे लोग नागरिकता के लिए आवेदन करने योग्य होंगे। भारतीय नागरिकता के लिए इन समुदायों के लोगों को भारत में कम से कम 11 साल रहने की बजाय कम से कम छह साल रहने पर भी नागरिकता के आवेदन के योग्य माना जाएगा। जनवरी 2019 में पारित विधेयक विगत लोकसभा के कार्यकाल के खतम होने के साथ ही कालातीत हो गया था, तब विधेयक को राज्यसभा में पेश नहीं किया गया था। राज्यसभा में इसलिए पेश नहीं किया गया, क्योंकि इसकी खूब आलोचना हुई थी और उच्च सदन का अंकगणित भी सरकार के अनुकूल नहीं था। मई 2019 में हुए लोकसभा चुनाव में एनडीए की भारी जीत और राज्यसभा में बड़ी हुई ताकत के कारण सरकार इस विधेयक को फिर लाने को प्रेरित हुई।	
कोई आश्चर्य नहीं, धर्म विशेष के लोगों को	

### मनसा वाचा कर्मणा

## मानसिक तस्वीरें

एक बड़ी खूबसूरत पंक्ति है कि आप वही हैं, जो आप बन सकते हैं। तो फिर कुछ बनने की जदूदोजहद क्यों ? दरअसल, हम भूले हुए होते हैं कि हम क्या हैं। यह भी सत्य है कि हममें जिस गुण की मौजूदगी होती है, वह या तो सुपुन होता है या अविकसित। इसे जगाकर ही आगे की यात्रा सफलतापूर्वक की जा सकती है। इतिहास में दर्ज है कि बेंजामिन फ्रेंकलिन, जो अमेरिका के उल्लेखनीय राजनेता के साथ-साथ पहले करोड़पति भी थे, पहले लगातार असफलता का स्वाद चख रहे थे। फिर उन्होंने पाया कि उनके भीतर कई गुण, जैसे संयम, अनुशासन, ईमानदारी, विनम्रता आदि अविकसित रूप में हैं। इन्हें मांजने के लिए उन्होंने मानसिक तस्वीरें देखने का अभ्यास शुरू किया। उन्होंने कल्पना की कि उनमें ये गुण पूरी शक्ति से मौजूद हैं। फिर इसके अनुरूप व्यवहार करने का अभ्यास किया। निरंतर सफल से ही वह गुण मौजूद हो। खुद को उस तरह से देखें और सोचें, जैसे आप बन सकते हैं। उस तरह न देखें, जैसे आप सचमुच हैं। धीरे-धीरे आप अपनी कल्पना के अनुरूप बन जाएंगे। न्यूरो-साइंटिस्ट डेविड एच हबेल के अनुसार, यह वसा ही है, जैसे प्रकृति में रहने वालों का कवितामय हो जाना।

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

नींव एक अंतर्द्वंद पर रखी गई होगी, जहां राजनीतिक समानता तो होगी, लेकिन समाजिक व आर्थिक बराबरी नहीं होगी।' इस आर्थिक और सामाजिक बराबरी से जब तक हम दूर रहेंगे, बाबा साहब आंबेडकर हमारे लिए प्रासंगिक बने रहेंगे। उससे कहीं ज्यादा, जितने वह आजादी की लड़ाई में प्रासंगिक थे।

<b>रजनी चांदीवाला</b> <p><b>असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर</b></p> <b>दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नजरिया</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>एक संकट टालने की कोशिश में बढ़े दूसरे की ओर</b>	
<b>असम में सिटीजन रजिस्टर के साथ जो समस्या शुरू हुई थी, नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक से जटिल हो सकती है।</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>सुदीप चक्रवर्ती</b> <p><b>वरिष्ठ पत्रकार</b></p>	
<span></span>	
जब नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक को संसद में पेश करने की तैयारी तेज हो गई है, तब राष्ट्रवादी बयानबाजी का दौर चल पड़ा है। दरअसल, नई दिल्ली स्थित इंद्रप्रस्थ विश्व संवाद केंद्र के सीईओ ने इस सप्ताह के शुरू में एक राष्ट्रीय दैनिक में प्रकाशित अपनी टिप्पणी में अजीब वाक्यांश का इस्तेमाल किया था। उन्होंने पूर्वोत्तर भारत में नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक संबंधी चिंताओं पर गौर नहीं किया था, जबकि मणिपुर, नगालैंड, मिजोरम और मेघालय ने प्रस्तावित विधेयक का लगातार विरोध किया है। विश्व संवाद केंद्र दूसरे कुछ संगठनों की तरह ही अपने राष्ट्रवादी एजेंडे को एक राष्ट्रीय एजेंडे के रूप में आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश में है। इस वर्ष की शुरुआत में जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेतृत्व वाली राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन सरकार ने इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक को आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश की थी, तब इस विधेयक को लेकर चिंताएं बढ़ गई थीं। इस विधेयक को राह देने से पूर्वोत्तर भारत में संतुलन बुरी तरह बिगड़ सकता है। आगे उस भाजपा की छवि पर भी असर पड़ सकता है, जो सबको साथ लेकर चलने और सबके विकास की बात करती रही है।	
नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक 2019 इसी साल जनवरी में लोकसभा में पारित हो गया था। नागरिकता अधिनियम 1955 को संशोधित करने जा रहे इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक के अनुसार, अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय के लोगों, जैसे हिंदुओं, सिखों, बौद्धों, जैनियों, पारसियों, ईसाईयों को अवैध शरणार्थी के रूप में नहीं देखा जाएगा... और ऐसे लोग नागरिकता के लिए आवेदन करने योग्य होंगे। भारतीय नागरिकता के लिए इन समुदायों के लोगों को भारत में कम से कम 11 साल रहने की बजाय कम से कम छह साल रहने पर भी नागरिकता के आवेदन के योग्य माना जाएगा। जनवरी 2019 में पारित विधेयक विगत लोकसभा के कार्यकाल के खतम होने के साथ ही कालातीत हो गया था, तब विधेयक को राज्यसभा में पेश नहीं किया गया था। राज्यसभा में इसलिए पेश नहीं किया गया, क्योंकि इसकी खूब आलोचना हुई थी और उच्च सदन का अंकगणित भी सरकार के अनुकूल नहीं था। मई 2019 में हुए लोकसभा चुनाव में एनडीए की भारी जीत और राज्यसभा में बड़ी हुई ताकत के कारण सरकार इस विधेयक को फिर लाने को प्रेरित हुई।	
कोई आश्चर्य नहीं, धर्म विशेष के लोगों को	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

नींव एक अंतर्द्वंद पर रखी गई होगी, जहां राजनीतिक समानता तो होगी, लेकिन समाजिक व आर्थिक बराबरी नहीं होगी।' इस आर्थिक और सामाजिक बराबरी से जब तक हम दूर रहेंगे, बाबा साहब आंबेडकर हमारे लिए प्रासंगिक बने रहेंगे। उससे कहीं ज्यादा, जितने वह आजादी की लड़ाई में प्रासंगिक थे।

<b>रजनी चांदीवाला</b> <p><b>असिस्टेंट प्रोफेसर</b></p> <b>दिल्ली विश्वविद्यालय</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नजरिया</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>एक संकट टालने की कोशिश में बढ़े दूसरे की ओर</b>	
<b>असम में सिटीजन रजिस्टर के साथ जो समस्या शुरू हुई थी, नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक से जटिल हो सकती है।</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>सुदीप चक्रवर्ती</b> <p><b>वरिष्ठ पत्रकार</b></p>	
<span></span>	
जब नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक को संसद में पेश करने की तैयारी तेज हो गई है, तब राष्ट्रवादी बयानबाजी का दौर चल पड़ा है। दरअसल, नई दिल्ली स्थित इंद्रप्रस्थ विश्व संवाद केंद्र के सीईओ ने इस सप्ताह के शुरू में एक राष्ट्रीय दैनिक में प्रकाशित अपनी टिप्पणी में अजीब वाक्यांश का इस्तेमाल किया था। उन्होंने पूर्वोत्तर भारत में नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक संबंधी चिंताओं पर गौर नहीं किया था, जबकि मणिपुर, नगालैंड, मिजोरम और मेघालय ने प्रस्तावित विधेयक का लगातार विरोध किया है। विश्व संवाद केंद्र दूसरे कुछ संगठनों की तरह ही अपने राष्ट्रवादी एजेंडे को एक राष्ट्रीय एजेंडे के रूप में आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश में है। इस वर्ष की शुरुआत में जब भारतीय जनता पार्टी के नेतृत्व वाली राष्ट्रीय जनतांत्रिक गठबंधन सरकार ने इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक को आगे बढ़ाने की कोशिश की थी, तब इस विधेयक को लेकर चिंताएं बढ़ गई थीं। इस विधेयक को राह देने से पूर्वोत्तर भारत में संतुलन बुरी तरह बिगड़ सकता है। आगे उस भाजपा की छवि पर भी असर पड़ सकता है, जो सबको साथ लेकर चलने और सबके विकास की बात करती रही है।	
नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक 2019 इसी साल जनवरी में लोकसभा में पारित हो गया था। नागरिकता अधिनियम 1955 को संशोधित करने जा रहे इस प्रस्तावित विधेयक के अनुसार, अल्पसंख्यक समुदाय के लोगों, जैसे हिंदुओं, सिखों, बौद्धों, जैनियों, पारसियों, ईसाईयों को अवैध शरणार्थी के रूप में नहीं देखा जाएगा... और ऐसे लोग नागरिकता के लिए आवेदन करने योग्य होंगे। भारतीय नागरिकता के लिए इन समुदायों के लोगों को भारत में कम से कम 11 साल रहने की बजाय कम से कम छह साल रहने पर भी नागरिकता के आवेदन के योग्य माना जाएगा। जनवरी 2019 में पारित विधेयक विगत लोकसभा के कार्यकाल के खतम होने के साथ ही कालातीत हो गया था, तब विधेयक को राज्यसभा में पेश नहीं किया गया था। राज्यसभा में इसलिए पेश नहीं किया गया, क्योंकि इसकी खूब आलोचना हुई थी और उच्च सदन का अंकगणित भी सरकार के अनुकूल नहीं था। मई 2019 में हुए लोकसभा चुनाव में एनडीए की भारी जीत और राज्यसभा में बड़ी हुई ताकत के कारण सरकार इस विधेयक को फिर लाने को प्रेरित हुई।	
कोई आश्चर्य नहीं, धर्म विशेष के लोगों को	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे हैं, उन्हें सजा आखिर कब दी जाएगी? जब महिलाएं सुरक्षित नहीं, तो समाज कैसे सुरक्षित रहेगा? आंकड़े बताते हैं कि भारत में प्रति घंटा लगभग 37	

<b>नीरज कुमार तिवारी</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>नेल बॉक्स</b>	
<span></span>	
<b>कब जागेगी सरकार</b>	
निर्भया कांड के सात साल हो गए, पर अभी तक पीड़ित परिवार को पूरी तरह इंसाफ नहीं मिल पाया है। इस घटना के बाद देश भर में विरोध-प्रदर्शन हुए थे और कानून सख्त बनाने की मांग हुई थी। इस दिशा में कुछ प्रयास हुए भी, लेकिन महिलाओं के साथ दरिंगी बढस्तूर जारी है। हैदराबाद की घटना के बाद भी देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से बलात्कार की खबरें सामने आ रही हैं। हेवानियत करने वाले खुलेआम घूम रहे हैं। सवाल यही है कि जो लोग भारत की माँग दा कर रहे	







## दैनिक जागरण

प्रार्थना ईश्वर से जोड़ने वाली कड़ी है

# आर्थिक सुस्ती का उपचार

रिजर्व बैंक ने व्याज दर घटाने के सिलसिले पर विमाम लगाते हुए जिस तरह चालू वित्त वर्ष के लिए विकास दर का अनुमान घटाया उससे यही संकेत मिल रहा है कि आर्थिक सुस्ती दूर करने में कठिनाई आ रही है। शायद यही कारण है कि अर्थव्यवस्था की सेहत को लेकर संसद के भीतर और बाहर चिंता जताने का सिलसिला तेज होे रहा है। इसे देखते हुए सरकार को ऐसे और कदम उठाने के लिए आगे आना चाहिए जिससे आर्थिक सुस्ती टूटे। ऐसा करते हुए उसे यह भी देखना होगा कि उसकी ओर से आर्थिक सुस्ती को दूर करने के लिए अभी तक जो कदम उठाए गए हैं वे जमीन पर प्रभावी साबित होे रहे हैं या नहीं? इसकी अनदेखी नहीं की जा सकती कि बीते दो माह में सरकार की ओर से छोटे-बड़े करीब दो दर्जन कदम उठाए जा चुके हैं। इनमें सबसे बड़ा कदम कॉर्पोरेट टैक्स में कटौती का था। यह सही है कि इन कदमों का असर दिखने में समय लगेगा, लेकिन इसका आकलन तो किया ही जाना चाहिए कि हलात बदल रहे हैं या नहीं? टैसा आकलन इसलिए किया जाना चाहिए, क्योंकि उद्योग-व्यापार जगत के लोग अभी भी उत्साहित नहीं दिख रहे हैं। वे तरह-तरह की शिकायतों से लैस दिखते हैं। जब किसी भी क्षेत्र के लोगों के शिकायती स्वर बढ़ जाते हैं तब यही माहौल बनता है कि कहीं कुछ ठीक नहीं होे रहा है। कई बार यह माहौल यथार्थ से भिन्न होता है, लेकिन वह उसे ढकने का काम करता है।

बेहतर होे कि सरकार उद्योग-व्यापार जगत को भरोसे में लेने के कदम उठाते समय यह ध्यान रखे कि भरोसे की बहाली तभी होगी जब कारोबारियों की चिंताओं और आशंकाओं को सचमुच दूर किया जाएगा। इससे इन्कार नहीं कि वित्त मंत्री निर्मला सीतारमण लगातार यह भरोसा दिला रही है कि आर्थिक सुस्ती दूर करने के लिए जो कुछ भी संभव है वह सह किया जाएगा, लेकिन तथ्य यही है कि कॉर्पोरेट टैक्स में कटौती के बाद से ऐसा कोई कदम नहीं उठाया गया है जिसे क्रांतिकारी या फिर तात्कालिक असर वाला कहा जा सके। उचित यह होगा कि सरकार दीर्घकालिक असर वाले कदमों के साथ तात्कालिक प्रभाव वाले कदम भी उठाए। इसी क्रम में सरकार को यह भी देखना होगा कि उद्योग-व्यापार जगत की जीएसटी संबंधी परेशानियां अनिवार्य रूप से दूर होें। इसका कोई औचित्य नहीं कि इस टैक्स व्यवस्था की जटिलताएं अभी भी उद्योग-व्यापार जगत को परेशान करें। नि:संदेह यह भी समय की मांग है कि सरकार श्रम कानूनों में बदलाव की दिशा में आगे बढ़े। इसी के साथ उद्योग जगत को भी यह समझना होगा कि उसे प्रतिस्पर्द्धी बनने की जरूरत है।

# नए नशे का जाल

पिछले कुछ वर्षों से बंगाल में अचानक नए-नए मादक पदार्थों की बरामदगी और इस कारोबार से जुड़े लोगों की गिरफ्तारी यह बताने को काफी है कि इस नए नशे का जाल काफी फैल होे चुका है। इस समय लगभग हर सप्ताह ही याबा नामक मादक पदार्थ जन्म होे रहा है। आखिर याबा है क्या? यह देखने में गुलाबी रंग की गोली है। जिसका असली नाम मेथेमफेटामाइन-कैफीन है। याबा गोली का धंधा बंगाल में इतना फलफूल रहा है कि पिछले एक वर्ष में कई करोड़ याबा गोлияंयां पकड़ी जा चुकी हैं। अभी कोलकाता के हेरिस्टिंग थाना क्षेत्र के बेकरी रोड से पुलिस के विशेष कार्य बल (एसटीएफ) ने एक लाख से अधिक याबा टैबलेट के साथ दो तस्करों को गिरफ्तार किया था। जिनके नाम टिंकू शेख और शेख जमाल हुसैन हैं। दोनों ही मुर्शिदाबाद के रहनेवाले हैं। इसके कुछ दिनों पहले ही लाखों याबा टैबलेट के साथ एसटीएफ अधिकारियों ने दो तस्करों को गिरफ्तार किया था। असल में याबा को थाई भाषा में पागलपन की दवा कहा जाता है। कहा जा रहा है कि याबा टैबलेट म्यांमार, चीन से बांग्लादेश के रास्ते भारत और खासकर पश्चिम बंगाल में पहुंच रहा है। याबा टैबलेट अक्सर ही गुलाबी या फिर मैरून रंग का होता है तथा इसके कवर पर डब्ल्यूआई अक्षर लिखे होते हैं। याबा थाईलैंड में सबसे खराब श्रेणी का मादक पदार्थ है। जो लोग इसका इस्तेमाल से लेकर धंधा करते हैं वहां इस जुर्म के लिए उम्रकैद से लेकर मौत तक की सजा दी जाती है। कहा जा रहा है कि असल में इस नशे की गोली को घोटों को पहाड़ी क्षेत्रों की चढ़ाई अथवा भारी कामों के दौरान दिया जाता था, परंतु अब इसे ईंसान भी इस्तेमाल करने लगे हैं। इसका सेवन कई तरीकों से किया जा रहा है। एक है याबा टैबलेट को एल्यूमीनियम पेपर (सिगरेट वाले रैपर) पर रखकर इसे नीचे से गर्म कर उससे भाप को सुंछा जाता है। या फिर गोлияंयों को निगला जाता है। इस गोली का इस्तेमाल स्कूलों, कॉलेजों के छात्र से लेकर रेव पार्टी में होे रहा है। यह बहुत ही खतरनाक नशा है। इस नए नशे के जाल को पूरी तरह से खत्म करना होगा नहीं तो हमारे देश का भविष्य बर्बाद कर सकता है।

### अभी कोलकाता के हेरिस्टिंग्स थाना क्षेत्र के बेकरी रोड से पुलिस के विशेष कार्य बल (एसटीएफ) ने एक लाख से अधिक याबा टैबलेट के साथ दो तस्करों को गिरफ्तार किया था

# आक्रामक क्यों हो रहे हैं बंदर

डॉ. महेश परिमल

बीते दिनों संसद में बंदरों के 'आतंक' के बारे में चर्चा हुई, लेकिन किसी ने इस पर ध्यान देने की आवश्यकता ही महसूस नहीं कि आखिर वे क्यों शहरी इलाकों में घुस रहे हैं? उनके आक्रामक होने के पीछे का कारण क्या है? आज मानव जाति जानवरों की दुरश्मन बन गई है। बंदरों के रहने की जगह पर मानव बसाहट शुरू हो गई है। घुसूरू जंगल तक मानव ने अपने घर बना लिए हैं, ऐसे में आखिर ये बंदर जाएं तो कहाँ जाएं? एक बार स्वयं को बंदरों के स्थान पर रखकर देख लें तो समझ में आ जाएगा कि आखिर बंदरों का आतंक बढ़ क्यों रहा है? ईसान इस मुगालते में न रहे कि पृथ्वी पर केवल उसका ही अधिकार है। चर्चा के दौरान एक सांसद ने कहा कि बंदरों के लिए विशेष रूप से पार्क होने चाहिए, पर प्रकृति ने उनके लिए जो स्थान दिया है, उस पर तो इसी मानव ने अपना कब्जा कर लिया है। विशेष पार्क बनाकर क्या होगा? धार्मिक स्थलों पर बंदर मानव जाति पर दृष्ट पड़ते हैं। दरअसल वे उसके पास की खाद्य सामग्री पर हमला बोलते हैं। आखिर वे खाद्य सामग्री पर ही हमला क्यों

हमें इस भ्रम को दूर करना होगा कि पृथ्वी पर रहने का अधिकार केवल मानव को ही है। यहां सभी जीवों को रहने का समान अधिकार है

बोलते हैं? जाहिर है, उनके पास खाने के लिए कुछ भी नहीं है। इस स्थिति में ईसान या तो चोरी करता है या लुट। बंदर खाने की चीजों पर झपटते हैं। इस चक्कर में उन्हें कई बार लाटियां भी खानी पड़ती हैं। भूखे बंदरों से कोई भी किस तरह से अच्छे व्यवहार की आशा कर सकता है? यह भूख उन्हें हमने ही दी है, उनके रहने की जगह पर अपना कब्जा जमाकर। कभी-कभी जंगली जानवर किसी एक विशेष वाहन पर अपना गुस्सा जाहिर करते हैं। क्या कभी किसी ने सोचा है कि वे आखिर ऐसा क्यों करते हैं? मधुरा में कुछ ट्रक चालक एक लाल मुंह की बंदरिया से उसका बच्चा छीनकर ले गए। इससे बंदरिया क्रोधित हो गई। अब वह वहां से गुजरने वाले सभी ट्रकों पर हमला करती। उसकी नजर में हर ट्रक वाला उसका मुजरिम है जिसने उसका बच्चा छीन लिया।



रशीद किंदवई

अगर सोनिया की जगह राहुल गांधी होते तो शिवसेना के साथ गठबंधन का निर्णय नहीं हो पाता और महाराष्ट्र में कांग्रेस के विधायक इधर-उधर भाग जाते

कांग्रेस के इतिहास में 28 नवंबर, 2019 का दिन बहुत अहम बन गया है। इस दिन कांग्रेस महाराष्ट्र में शिवसेना के नेतृत्व वाली सरकार का हिस्सा बन गई। हालांकि मुंबई के शिवाजी पार्क में आयोजित शपथ ग्रहण समारोह में सोनिया एवं राहुल गांधी शामिल नहीं हुए, लेकिन अहमद कमलनाथ जैसे प्रमुख नेता अगली पंक्ति में बैठे नजर आए। कांग्रेस द्वारा शिवसेना को समर्थन देने का निर्णय आसान नहीं था। सोनिया गांधी, राहुल गांधी, एके एंटनी, मनमोहन सिंह, छत्तीसगढ़ के मुख्यमंत्री भूपेश बघेल सहित ज्यादातर नेता स्वाभाविक ही शिवसेना से किसी भी तरह के गठबंधन के खिलाफ थे, लेकिन कमलनाथ ने याद दिलाया कि 1979-80 में जब कांग्रेस सत्ता से वंचित हो चुकी थी तब पार्टी ने एक व्यावहारिक निर्णय करते हुए अपने धुर विरोधी बालासाहब ठाकरे की ओर दोस्ती का हाथ बढ़ाया था। बालासाहब ने न सिर्फ आपातकाल का समर्थन किया, बल्कि ‘नसबंदी’ के विरुद्ध संजय गांधी के जुनून को प्रशंसा भी की थी। कांग्रेस में इस पर भी मंथन हुआ कि शिवसेना शुरू से ही उग्र राष्ट्रवाद की झंडाबंददार रही है, लेकिन वह जनसंघ, बजरंग दल या विश्व हिंदू परिषद की तरह आरएसएस का आनुषंगिक संगठन नहीं है। कमलनाथ के प्रयासों को तब बल मिला जब महाराष्ट्र कांग्रेस के कई नेता

जैसे पृथ्वीराज चव्हाण, अशोक चव्हाण और बालासाहब थोराट ने कांग्रेस के कई जमीनी मुस्लिम कार्यकर्ताओं की सोनिया से बातचीत कराई। वे सब शिवसेना के साथ गठबंधन के पक्ष में थे। यह देख शिवसेना से गठबंधन का विरोध कर रहे भूपेश बघेल, जयराम रमेश और अहमद पटेल के सुर नरम पड़े और यह तय हुआ कि शिवसेना के साथ कांग्रेस का गठबंधन केवल न्यूनतम साझा कार्यक्रम की हद तक सीमित रहेगा और उद्भव ठाकरे सरकार इस पर अडिग रहेगी। इसके साथ ही तय हुआ कि सरकार में शामिल कांग्रेस, शिवसेना एवं शरद पवार के नेतृत्व वाली राकांपा अपनी राजनीतिक विचारधारा पर कायम रहकर स्वतंत्र रूप से कार्य करती रहेगी। राजनीतिक रूप से देखें तो सोनिया ने इस तरह एक तीर से कई निशाने साध लिए। भाजपा वैचारिक रूप से कांग्रेस की दुविधा और पवार की बार-बार रंग बदलने वाली प्रकृति पर तीखे हमले करती रही, लेकिन इसके बावजूद सोनिया गांधी ने लक्ष्य पर नजरें जमाए रखीं और हर पक्ष से चर्चा की। उदार वामपंथी इसके विरुद्ध दबाव बनाते रहे, जबकि गठबंधन समर्थक इस बाबत शीघ्र निर्णय लेने का आवश्यकता बताते रहे। आखिरकार सोनिया की निर पंरिचित ज्यादा-से-ज्यादा विचार-विमर्श की शैली काम आई और सारे लोग एक छत के नीचे जमा हो गए। सोनिया की यह कार्यशैली निश्चित ही राहुल गांधी के

# नाकाम नीतियों का नतीजा महंगा प्याज

कई शहरों में प्याज की खुदरा कीमतें अब सौ रुपये प्रति किलो के पार चली गई हैं। सरकार ने प्याज की जमाखोरी पर अंकुश लगाने के लिए व्यापारियों पर छापेमारी के अलावा, प्याज के थोक व्यापारियों पर भंडारण सीमा 500 से घटाकर 250 क्विंटल और खुदरा विक्रेताओं की सीमा 100 से घटाकर 50 क्विंटल कर दी है। केंद्र सरकार ने प्याज की कीमतों को काबू करने के लिए 1.2 लाख टन प्याज दुसरे देशों से आयात करने का निर्णय लिया है। इसमें से मिन्न, तुर्की आदि देशों से कुल 21,000 टन प्याज आयात के सौदे किए जा चुके हैं, पर देश की लगभग 60,000 टन प्रतिदिन की मांग के सापेक्ष यह बहुत कम है और फिर इस प्याज के देश में पहुंचने में भी करीब एक माह का समय लगेगा। प्याज की कम अवका और विलंबित आयात के कारण ही प्याज के दाम फिर बढ़ने शुरू हुए हैं।

सरकार ने कीमतों काबू करने के लिए सबसे पहले जून में प्याज निर्यातकों को दी जा रही 10 प्रतिशत सब्सिडी खत्म की। फिर सितंबर में प्याज के निर्यात पर 850 डॉलर प्रति टन (लगभग 60 रुपये प्रति किलो) का न्यूनतम निर्यात मूल्य लगा दिया। इसके बाद भी जब कीमतें काबू में नहीं आई तो प्याज के थोक व्यापारियों और खुदरा विक्रेताओं के लिए स्टॉक लिमिट तय कर दी गई। प्याज के निर्यात को भी पूर्णतया प्रतिबंधित कर दिया। इन कदमों से कीमतों में कुछ कमी तो आई पर असमय अत्यधिक बारिश के कारण महाराष्ट्र, मध्य प्रदेश, राजस्थान, गुजरात और कर्नाटक में प्याज और अन्य सब्जियों की फसल को काफी नुकसान हुआ जिसके चलते अक्टूबर-नवंबर में खरीफ का प्याज, टमाटर और अन्य सब्जियों की आवक अशा के अनुरूप नहीं हुई। इससे कीमतें फिर आसमान छूने लगीं। प्याज उत्पादक राज्यों में पहले तो देरी से आए मानसून और फिर अत्यधिक बारिश ने हालात बिगड़ दिए। वहीं प्याज का रकबा भी पिछले साल के लगभग तीन लाख हेक्टेयर के मुकाबले इस साल लगभग 2.60 लाख हेक्टेयर रह गया। श्रीरूप के प्याज का उत्पादन भी पिछले साल के 70 लाख टन के मुकाबले 52 लाख टन रहने का अनुमान है। देश में सबसे ज्यादा, लगभग एक-तिहाई प्याज उत्पादन करने वाले महाराष्ट्र में नवंबर में प्याज की आवक पिछले साल के 41 लाख टन के मुकाबले घटकर 24 लाख टन रह गई। इस कारण अब प्याज की कीमतें जनवरी में ही कुछ कम हो पाएंगी।

आखिर तमाम कोशिशों के बावजूद सरकार प्याज,



चौधरी पुणेन्द्र सिंह



टमाटर, आलू और अन्य सब्जियों की कीमतों को निश्चित रखने, उपभोक्ताओं और किसानों के हितों की रक्षा करने में बार-बार नाकाम क्यों होती है? 2022 तक किसानों की आय दोगुनी करने के मोदी सरकार के लक्ष्य में बागवानी फसलों की महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका है। इन फसलों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए सरकार ने बजट में कई योजनाएं शुरू की हैं। सब्जियों में मात्रा के लिहाज से आधा उत्पादन आलू, प्याज और टमाटर का ही होता है।

एक तथ्य यह भी है कि आलू, प्याज और टमाटर, इन तीनों फसलों का देश की घरेलू मांग से ज्यादा उत्पादन हो रहा है और हम इन फसलों के निर्यात की स्थिति में हैं। गत वर्ष प्याज का 22 लाख टन निर्यात कर हम विश्व के सबसे बड़े प्याज निर्यातक हैं। आखिर ऐसा क्या हुआ कि अब उसी प्याज को देश महंगे दामों पर आयात करने के लिए मजबूर हैं। आलू, प्याज और टमाटर की कीमतों में स्थायित्व हेतु सरकार ने पिछले साल 500 करोड़ रुपये की ऑपरेशन ग्रीस टॉप (टोमैटो, अनियन, पोटेटो) योजना शुरू की थी। इसका मूल उद्देश्य एक तरफ उपभोक्ताओं को इन सब्जियों की उचित मूल्य पर साल भर आपूर्ति सुनिश्चित करना और दूसरी तरफ किसानों को लाभकारी मूल्य दिलाना था, लेकिन सरकार को कुछ और कदम उठाने होंगे। सबसे पहले तो इन फसलों की उचित मात्रा



अवधेश राजगुट

लिए महत्वपूर्ण सबक है।

कांग्रेस के भीतर इस पर सभी एकमत हैं कि अगर सोनिया की जगह राहुल होते तो शिवसेना के साथ गठबंधन का यह निर्णय नहीं होे पाता और महाराष्ट्र में कांग्रेस के विधायक इधर-उधर भाग जाते। आम धारणा के विपरीत कांग्रेस खुद को एक हिंदू समर्थक पार्टी के रूप में प्रस्तुत करने की कोशिश करती रही है। 1980 में इंदिरा गांधी को जब दोबारा सत्ता हासिल हुई तो उन्होंने विश्व हिंदू परिषद की ‘एकात्मता यात्रा’ में निमंत्रण स्वीकार कर बहुसंख्यक समुदाय को पैर जमाने के जतन किए। नौकरशाह एसएस गिल ने महसूस किया कि 1980 के बाद इंदिरा ने मुसलमानों की अनदेखी शुरू कर दी थी। अपनी किताब ‘द डायनार्स्टी-अ पॉलिटिकल बायोग्राफी ऑफ द प्रीमियर रूलिंग फैमिली ऑफ मॉडर्न इंडिया’ में वह लिखते हैं कि कैसे इंदिरा के विश्वासपात्र सीएम स्टीफन ने 1983 में यह घोषणा की कि ‘हिंदू संस्कृति एवं कांग्रेस संस्कृति की धारा एक ही है।’ अपनी हत्या से कोई छह माह पहले इंदिरा गांधी ने बहुसंख्यक हिंदू समुदाय को विश्वास दिलाने के लिए कहा था कि ‘अगर उनके साथ कोई अन्याय होता

है या उन्हें अपने अधिकार नहीं मिलते हैं तो यह देश की अखंडता के लिए घातक होगा।’ तब कांग्रेस के विचारक वीएन गाडगिल कहते थे कि ‘मुसलमानों के वोट महज 18 प्रतिशत हैं। अगर वे सभी मिलकर कांग्रेस को वोट दे दें तो भी पार्टी सत्ता हासिल नहीं कर सकती। इसीलिए हम बाकी 82 प्रतिशत लोगों को भावनाओं को अनदेखा नहीं कर सकते।’ 16 जनवरी, 1999 को सोनिया के नेतृत्व में कांग्रेस कार्यकारिणी ने धर्मानिरपेक्षता की परिभाषा संबंधी जो प्रस्ताव पारित किया उसके मुताबिक ‘भारत इसलिए धर्मानिरपेक्ष है, क्योंकि यहां के हिंदू धर्मानिरपेक्ष हैं।’ 1989 में जब राजीव गांधी प्रधानमंत्री थे तब उन्होंने अयोध्या जाकर सरयू के तट से चुनाव प्रचार अभियान की शुरुआत करते हुए रामराज्य लाने का वादा किया था। वैचारिक एवं ऐतिहासिक रूप से इस पुरानी पार्टी ने राष्ट्र के नेतृत्व को अपना ‘कर्तव्य’ मान रखा है। स्वतंत्रता प्राप्ति के मात्र एक साल बाद 1948 में हुए कांग्रेस के जयपुर अधिवेशन में ही पट्टाभि सीतारमैया ने अपने कार्यकर्ताओं को यह ‘कर्तव्य’ समझाया था। इसमें उन्होंने कांग्रेस एवं उसकी

में खरीद, भंडारण एवं वितरण हेतु शीतगृहों और अन्य आधारभूत संरचना का इंतजाम करना होगा। हमारे देश में लगभग 8000 शीतगृह हैं, पर इनमें से 90 प्रतिशत में आलू का ही भंडारण किया जाता है। यही कारण है कि आलू की कीमतों में कभी भी अप्रत्याशित उछाल नहीं आती। प्याज के भंडारण की भी बड़े पैमाने पर बढ़ाने की आवश्यकता है ताकि किसानों और उपभोक्ताओं, दोनों के हितों को संरक्षित किया जा सके। केंद्र सरकार ने इस साल प्याज का 57,000 टन का बफर स्टॉक बनाया था, पर यह देश की केवल एक दिन की मांग के बराबर ही था। हमें प्याज का कम से कम 10 लाख टन का बफर बनाना होगा। इन तीनों सब्जियों का बड़े पैमाने पर प्रसंस्करण करने हेतु उद्योग लगाने होंगे। अभी आलू की फसल का केवल 7 प्रतिशत, प्याज का 3 प्रतिशत और टमाटर का मात्र 1 प्रतिशत प्रसंस्करण होे पा रहा है। इनके मूल्यों को स्थिर रखने, ऑफ-सीजन में उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करने और निर्यात बढ़ाने के लिए इन फसलों का कम से कम 20 प्रतिशत प्रसंस्करण का लक्ष्य होना चाहिए। इसे प्रोत्साहित करने के लिए जीएसटी भी कम करना चाहिए। साथ ही घरेलू मांग से ज्यादा उत्पादन की सूरत में हमें निर्यातक देश के रूप में भी स्थापित होना होगा। अभी इन फसलों का लगभग 5500 करोड़ रुपये मूल्य का निर्यात होे पा रहा है, जिसे तीन-चार गुना बढ़ाने की दूरकार है। इसके लिए भंडारण और प्रसंस्करण नीति दुरुस्त करनी होगी।

बार-बार न्यूनतम निर्यात मूल्य या स्टॉक लिमिट लगाने से व्यापारी भंडारण, प्रसंस्करण और निर्यात की व्यवस्था में निवेश करने से पीछे हट जाते हैं। स्पष्ट है कि स्थिर सरकारी नीतियां बनाने और आवश्यक वस्तु अधिनियम में सुधार की जरूरत है। नाबाई के एक अध्ययन के अनुसार आलू, प्याज, टमाटर के उपभोक्ता द्वारा चुकाए मूल्य का 25-30 प्रतिशत ही किसानों तक पहुंच पाता है। हमें इन फसलों में अमूल मॉडल को लागू करना होगा। इसमें दूध के उपभोक्ता-मूल्य का 75-80 प्रतिशत किसानों को मिलता है। सरकार को कृषि उत्पाद बाजार समिति अधिनियम में सुधार कर बिचौलियों की भूमिका सीमित करनी होगी। इन तीनों फसलों को एमएसपी के तहत लाकर इनकी उचित खरीद, भंडारण और प्रसंस्करण की व्यवस्था की जानी चाहिए ताकि किसान को फसल फेंकने की नौबत न आए और लोगों की जेब भी न कटे। ( लेखक किसान शक्ति संघ के अध्यक्ष हैं )

response@jagran.com

विचारधारा को पूरे देश की विचारधारा बताते हुए आग्रह किया था कि इस बाबत आमजन का समर्थन जुटाना चाहिए, जिससे कांग्रेस और सरकार अच्छे से काम कर सके, लेकिन राष्ट्र नेतृत्व के इस ‘कर्तव्य’ निर्वहन का चित्र 1998 में तब बदलने लगा जब सोनिया गांधी के नेतृत्व में पार्टी ने राजनीतिक साझेदारी के लिए औपचारिक रूप से सहमति प्रदान कर दी। हालांकि इसके बाद भी कांग्रेस के राजनीतिक प्रस्तावों में इसे नकारा जाता रहा कि एक पाक की सत्ता के दिन लद गए।

पचमढ़ी चिंतन शिविर में कांग्रेस का आग्रह था कि वैचारिक, नीतिगत और राष्ट्र निर्माण के मामलों में पार्टी को क्षेत्रीय पार्टियों पर वरीयता प्राप्त है, जो स्थानीय जाति एवं भाषा आधारित मुद्दों से आगे नहीं निकल पातीं, लेकिन जुलाई 2003 में कांग्रेस के हिमाला अधिवेशन में सोनिया ने पार्टी को राजद जैसी अपेक्षाकृत छोटी पार्टी के साथ सीटों के बंटवारे के लिए तैयार किया। 14 सूत्रीय ‘शिमला संकल्प’ में कहा गया कि भाजपा के नेतृत्व वाले राजग का सामना करने के लिए धर्मानिरपेक्ष ताकतों को भी आसने में गठबंधन कर लेना चाहिए। उद्भव ठाकरे के नेतृत्व वाली मिली-जुली सरकार के लिए जो न्यूनतम साझा कार्यक्रम तय किया गया है उसके लिखित अंग्रेजी प्रारूप में ‘सेक्युलर’ शब्द कई जगह मिलता है, लेकिन हिंदी में मराठी प्रारूप में कहीं भी धर्मानिरपेक्षता की बात नहीं की गई है। ऐसे में महा विकास अघाड़ी की यह सरकार न्यूनतम साझा कार्यक्रम से चिपकी है रही तब भी आगे कई मुद्दे आते आते वाले हैं जिन पर वैचारिक रूप से मतभेद होे सकते हैं। जैसे एनआरसी या राम मंदिर निर्माण का मसला। अघाड़ी के ये तीनों दल इनसे कैसे निपटेंगे, यह देखना दिलचस्प होगा।

(लेखक वरिष्ठ पत्रकार एवं ऑब्जर्वर रिसर्च फाउंडेशन में विजिटिंग फैलो हैं) response@jagran.com



## ईश्वर का विधान

हम सभी परमपिता परमात्मा के पुत्र हैं। वे हम सभी पुत्रों को समान रूप से चाहते हैं, पर वह जिन्हें योग्य, विश्वसनीय और ईमानदार समझते हैं, उन्हें अपनी राजशक्ति का कुछ अंश इसलिए सौंप देते हैं कि वे उसके ईश्वरीय उद्देश्यों की पूर्ति में हाथ बटाएं। धन, बुद्धि, स्वास्थ्य, शिल्प, चतुरता, मनोबल, नेतृत्व आदि शक्तियां जिन्हें अधिक मात्रा में दी गई हैं वे अधिकार नगराधिकारी को देकर राजा कोई पक्षपात नहीं करता, बल्कि अधिकार योग्य व्यक्ति से अधिक काम लेने की नीति बरताता है। परमात्मा भी कुछ थोड़े से लोगों को अधिक संपन्न बनाकर अपने अन्य लोगों के साथ अन्याय नहीं करता। उसने सभी को समान रूप से विकसित होने के अवसर दिए हैं। वह पक्षपात करे तो फिर समझौते और दयालु कैसे कहा जा सकता है। भोजन, वस्त्र, आवास तथा जीवनयापन की उचित आवश्यकता पूरी करने वाली वस्तुएं प्रभु प्रदत्त प्रत्येक व्यक्ति के लिए वेतन के समान हैं। आलसी, अकर्मण्य, उल्टे-सीधे काम करने वाले लोगों का वेतन कट जाता है और उन्हें किन्हीं अंशों में अभावग्रस्त रहने को विवश होना पड़ता है। जो परिश्रमी, पुरुषार्थी, सीधे मार्ग पर चलने वाले हैं, वे अपना उचित वेतन यथासमय पाते रहते हैं। इस वेतन के अतिरिक्त विभिन्न प्रकार की शक्तियां लोगों को जन्मजात मिली होती हैं। ये शक्तियां केवल इस उद्देश्य के लिए होती हैं कि इनके संपन्न कोई व्यक्ति अपने से कमजोर लोगों को ऊपर उठाने में लगाए। अर्थात प्रत्येक समृद्ध मनुष्य को प्रभु ने यह कर्तव्य सौंपा है कि अपने से जो कमजोर हैं, उनकी मदद करने में इन शक्तियों को व्यय किया जाए। जैसे कि यदि कोई सुशिक्षित है तो उसका फर्ज है कि अशिक्षितों में शिक्षा का प्रसार करे। कोई शक्तिशाली है तो उसका कर्तव्य है कि निर्बलों को सताने वालों को रूके। धनवान के निकट धन इसलिए आसानी से रुप में रखा गया है कि वह उसके उपयोग से विद्या, बुद्धि, व्यवसाय, संगठन, सद्बुद्धन आदि का इस प्रकार आोजजन करे कि उससे जरूरतमंद लोग अपनी चतुर्मुखी उन्नति कर सकें। श्रीमती रमन त्रिपाठी

### मेलबाक्स

को भी उसी प्रकार परिपक्व तथा मानवतावादी होते चले जाना चाहिए था, जिस प्रकार पहले यहूदी और फिर ईसाई हो गए। प्रारंभ में ये दोनों मजहब भी कट्टरपंथी स्वभाव वाले थे। अब उनमें परिवर्तन हो चुका है। लंबी आयु के लिए व्यक्ति और विचार, दोनों में सामंजस्यवादिता का होना जरूरी है। अजय मित्तल, मेरठ

### अपरध और शिक्षा

दिल्ली के वसंत विहार में एक गुवती की हत्या के विरोध में करीब सात साल पहले जैसा माहौल यहां था, अब एक बार फिर वैसा ही है।दरगवाद की घटना के बाद देखने को मिल रहा है। लोगों की जुबान पर एक ही सवाल है कि आखिर कब तक ऐसा ही चलता रहेगा? 2012 की उस लड़ाई में देश का हर एक ईसान यह मांग कर रहा था कि महिलाओं की सुरक्षा के लिए टोस कदम उठाए जाने चाहिए। उसके बाद महिलाओं के लिए कानून बने भी। उनके लिए विशेष हेल्पलाइन नंबर भी जारी किए गए, लेकिन सोचने की बात यह है कि जो भी काम किए गए, उसका कितने प्रतिशत प्रभाव देखने को मिला है? यह समस्या कानून की नहीं, सभ्यता की है। सभ्यता अच्छी शिक्षा से आती है। शिक्षा से व्यक्ति शिष्टाचारी बनता है और सही और गलत में फर्क करना सीखता है। शिष्टित व्यक्ति अपराध करने से पहले एक बार जरूर सोचेंगा। शिक्षा के स्तर पर अभी भी हमारा देश बहुत पीछे है जिसके कारण ऐसे जघन्य अपराध सामने आते हैं। हमें जरूरत है कि देश में शिक्षा का स्तर और भी अच्छा होे। अपराधियों के पीछे उनकी बिगड़ी मानसिकता ही अपराध का सबसे बड़ा कारण होती है और इसे शिक्षा से ही

बदला जा सकता है।

palshivani542@gmail.com

### मार्शल आर्ट जरूरी

राज्यों ने उन्हें जारी निर्भया फंड का प्रयोग ही नहीं किया है। वास्तव में इस फंड के जरिये हर स्कूल, कॉलेज में अनिवार्य रूप से एक मार्शल आर्ट शिक्षक की नियुक्ति के साथ जुड़ो कराटे को सिलेबस में शामिल हर हर शहर में एक मार्शल आर्ट केंद्र तो खोला ही जा सकता है। इससे रोजगार भी बढ़ेगा और बेटियों का आत्मविश्वास बढ़ने के साथ उन्हें हर समय किसी रक्षक की जरूरत नहीं होगी। हर स्कूल, कॉलेज, चौराहे और सड़क पर महिला थाने तथा महिला हेल्पलाइन के नंबर लिखे हों। इनके अलावा सभी लोगों को बेटों के चाल चलन पर भी नजर रख उन्हें घरे की महिलाओं के साथ बाहर की महिलाओं का सम्मान करना भी सिखाना होगा। इन सबकी शुरुआत समाज को खुद से करनी होगी, क्योंकि दुष्कर्म और छेड़छाड़ करने वाले लोग कहीं बाहर से नहीं आते, इसी समाज में ही पनपते हैं।

pradeepwbsr@gmail.com

इस संतंभ में किसी भी विषय पर राय व्यक्त करने अथवा दैनिक जागरण के राष्ट्रीय संस्करण पर प्रतिक्रिया व्यक्त करने के लिए पाठकवार सांकर आमंत्रित है। आप हमें पत्र भेजने के साथ ई-मेल भी कर सकते हैं। अपने पत्र इस पते पर भेजें : दैनिक जागरण, राष्ट्रीय संस्करण, डी-210-211, सेक्टर-63, नोएडा ई-मेल- mailbox@jagran.com



## नागरिकता का सवाल

नागरिकता संशोधन विधेयक को मंत्रिमंडल ने मंजूरी दे दी है। अब सरकार इस विधेयक को संसद के दोनों सदनों में रखेगी, ताकि यह कानून का रूप ले सके। लोकसभा में तो राजग को प्रचंड बहुमत है, इसलिए वहां से इसे मंजूरी मिलने में कोई दिक्कत नहीं आएगी। राजग से अलग कुछ दलों की इस पर चुप्पी को देखते हुए राज्यसभा में भी कोई बड़ी अड़चन नजर नहीं आती। राष्ट्रीयता कानून विधेयक का मकसद पाकिस्तान, बांग्लादेश और अफगानिस्तान से शरणार्थी के रूप में भारत आए गैर-मुसलिम लोगों को नागरिकता प्रदान करना है। हालांकि इस विधेयक के सभी पहलुओं को अभी सार्वजनिक नहीं किया गया है, पर इसे लेकर विपक्षी दल सरकार पर इसलिए हमलावर हैं कि वह इसके जरिए अल्पसंख्यक मुसलिमों पर शिकंजा कसने का प्रयास कर रही है। मगर सरकार ने कहा है कि ये तीनों देश चूंकि मुसलिम बहुल हैं और वहां गैर-मुसलिम नागरिकों पर अत्याचार होते रहते हैं, इसलिए उनको सुरक्षा देना हमारा कर्तव्य है। वहां से आए मुसलिम शरणार्थियों को वापस भेजने में उनकी सुरक्षा आदि का कोई खतरा नहीं है। मगर विपक्ष के गले यह तर्क उतर नहीं रहा।

दरअसल, असम सहित पूर्वोत्तर राज्यों में जिस तरह राष्ट्रीय नागरिकता पंजीयन यानी एनआरसी लागू करने का प्रयास हो रहा है और उसमें बहुत सारे ऐसे लोगों पर भी भारत की नागरिकता खत्म होने का खतरा मंडराने लगा है, जो कई पीढ़ियों से यहां रह रहे हैं। बस कुछ जरूरी कागजात न हो पाने की वजह से उनकी नागरिकता संदिग्ध मान ली गई है। फिर कुछ मौकों पर गृहमंत्री के दिए बयानों से लोगों में यह भ्रम पैदा हुआ है कि वे सिर्फ मुसलिम समुदाय के लोगों को देश से बाहर भेजने का रास्ता निकाल रहे हैं। इसलिए विपक्ष का विरोध अधिक है। जबकि सरकार ने एनआरसी लागू करने का कदम इसलिए उठाया था कि इन तीनों पड़ोसी देशों से शरणार्थी की तरह घुसपैठ करने वालों में कई आतंकवादी भी पहुंच जाते हैं। यों बांग्लादेशी शरणार्थियों की गतिविधियां अनेक मौकों पर संदिग्ध पाई गई हैं। चूंकि सरकार आतंकवाद से निपटने के लिए हर तरह से चाकचौबंद होना चाहती है, इसलिए वह एनआरसी को लेकर गंभीर है।

पूरी दुनिया में जहां भी अल्पसंख्यक समुदायों के प्रति अगर अन्याय होता है और वे वहां से पलायन करते हैं, तो दूसरे देश उन्हें शरणार्थी के तौर पर रहने का अवसर देते हैं। हर जगह इसके कार्यदे-कानून हैं। मगर शरणार्थियों को संबंधित देश की नागरिकता दी जाए या नहीं, इसके लिए भी कानून हैं। भारत में भी हैं। मगर खासकर बांग्लादेश से आकर वर्षों से यहां बसे बहुत सारे मुसलिम परिवारों ने राशन कार्ड, आधार कार्ड जैसे नागरिकता के लिए जरूरी कागजात भी हासिल कर लिए हैं। गैरकानूनी तरीके से ऐसे प्रमाणपत्र बनवाने वाले कुछ एजेंटों की मदद से कई पासपोर्ट आदि भी हासिल कर लेते हैं। ऐसे में उनकी पहचान कठिन हो जाती है। फिर हर देश की अपनी सीमा होती है। भारत में पहले ही जनसंख्या का भारी दबाव है, उस पर भारी संख्या में आ जुटे शरणार्थियों के लिए बुनियादी सुविधाएं मुहैया कराना कठिन काम है। इसलिए भी सरकार की चिंता समझी जा सकती है। मगर बांग्लादेश बंटवारे के समय सीमा संबंधी कुछ उलझनें होने की वजह से वहां के बहुत सारे लोगों की नागरिकता को लेकर विवाद रहता है। ऐसे में इस कानून को अंतिम रूप देने से पहले इसके व्यावहारिक पहलुओं पर गंभीरता से विचार करने की जरूरत है।

## हताशा और हथियार

छत्तीसगढ़ के नारायणपुर जिले में बुधवार को आइटीबीपी शिविर में एक जवान ने जिस तरह गोलीबारी कर चार जवानों की हत्या कर दी और फिर गोली मार कर खुदकुशी कर ली, उसने एक बार फिर इस गहराती समस्या की ओर ध्यान दिलाया है। यह कोई नई घटना नहीं है। पहले भी कई मौकों पर देश के अलग-अलग हिस्सों से ऐसी खबरें मिली हैं, जिनमें किसी जवान ने गुर्रसे में बेकाबू होकर अपने ही साथियों पर गोली चला दी या खुद को गोली मार ली। जिन सैनिकों को देश की रक्षा का सबसे अहम हिस्सा माना जाता है, उनके बीच इस तरह की घटनाओं पर तत्काल गौर करने और इन्हें रोकने के लिए हर स्तर पर जरूरी कदम उठाने की जरूरत है। मुश्किल यह है कि आमतौर पर जब भी ऐसी कोई घटना सामने आती है, उसके बाद एक सामान्य औपचारिकता के तहत उस खास घटना की जांच होती है और फिर समस्या के समाधान के लिए ठोस उपाय करने के प्रयासों को ढीला छोड़ दिया जाता है।

नारायणपुर के शिविर में जिस जवान ने इस दुखद घटना को अंजाम दिया, उससे संबंधित खबरों में बताया गया है कि इस महीने के आखिर में उसे छुट्टी लेकर एक पारिवारिक समारोह में गांव जाना था। लेकिन उसकी छुट्टियां मंजूर नहीं हो पाई थीं, जिसे लेकर उसके साथी जवानों ने मजाक उड़ाया। इसके बाद गुर्रसे में आकर उसने गोलीबारी कर दी। इस घटना का कारण प्रथम दृष्ट्या बहुत मामूली लगता है, लेकिन सवाल है कि आखिर ऐसी स्थिति पैदा होने पर उनसे सहज तरीके से पार पाने या निपटने को लेकर भी जवानों के बीच कोई कार्यक्रम चलाया जाता है या नहीं! आखिर कितन वजहों से कोई जवान खुद पर नियंत्रण खो देता है और या तो अपने साथियों की जान ले लेता है या फिर खुद को भी मार डालता है? सुरक्षा बलों के बीच रोजमर्रा की जीवनशैली में अनुशासन एक सबसे अहम पहलू होता है। फिर वे कौन-से हालात होते हैं, जो उन्हें अनुशासन की सीमा को भी तोड़ देने पर मजबूर कर देते? ऐसी स्थिति पैदा न हो, इसके लिए सुरक्षा बलों के भीतर शीर्ष स्तर पर और सरकार की ओर से जैसी कोशिशें हो रही हैं, क्या वे पर्याप्त हैं? ज्यादा जरूरी होने पर जवानों की छुट्टियों के आवेदन पर संवेदनशीलता के साथ विचार करने से लेकर जवानों के बीच व्यवहार संबंधी प्रशिक्षण के मसले पर क्या कुछ और उपाय किए जाने की जरूरत है?

सरकार का कहना है कि सशस्त्र बलों के बीच कामकाज का स्वस्थ माहौल बनाने के लिए कपड़े, खाने-पीने, परिवार के साथ रहने, यात्रा सुविधा, स्कूल, मनोरंजन, योग के अलावा अवसाद दूर करने के उपायों जैसी सुविधाएं मुहैया कराई जा रही हैं। इसके अलावा, तनाव कम करने के लिए ‘मिलाप’ और ‘सहयोग’ जैसे प्रोजेक्ट चलाए जा रहे हैं और पेशेवर काउंसलरों की मदद ली जा रही है। सवाल है कि इसके बावजूद जवानों में खुदकुशी से लेकर साथियों पर जानलेवा हमला करने की घटनाएं क्यों नहीं रुक पा रही हैं। इसी साल फरवरी में संसद में यह जानकारी दी गई थी कि सन 2011 से 2018 के बीच भारतीय सशस्त्र बलों और सेना के तीनों अंगों को मिला कर आठ सौ बानबे कर्मियों ने आत्महत्या कर ली। सुरक्षा बलों की अहमियत, जीवनशैली और उनके कामकाज के ढांचे को देखते हुए यह संख्या काफी बड़ी है और निश्चित रूप से यह समूचे देश के लिए चिंता की बात है।

## कल्पमेधा

**हमारी शंकाएं विश्वासघाती हैं, वे हमें उन अच्छाइयों से वंचित रखती हैं जिन्हें हम प्रयत्न करके पाप्त करते हैं।**

**—शेक्सपियर**

# हरित क्रांति का नया कदम

## वीरेंद्र कुमार पैन्यूली

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**जंगली** जानवरों के बढ़ते आक्रमणों से आज उत्तराखंड के गांवों में रहना और खेती करना जोखिम भरा होता जा रहा है। अन्य पहाड़ी इलाकों में भी कमोबेश ऐसी स्थिति बनती दिख रही है। उत्तराखंड में इसके समाधान का एक रास्ता जन सहयोग से जंगलों में खाद्य श्रृंखला को सशक्त करना माना जा रहा है। इसके लिए कुछ समाजसेवी घूम-घूम कर लोगों की नदी-नालों के किनारे गांव, शहर, बस्तियों की सीमाओं पर, नजदीकी जंगलों में बीज बमों से बीज बमबारी करने को प्रेरित कर रहे हैं। उनके अभियान का नाम बीज बम अभियान है, जिसे वे खेल-खेल में पर्यावरण संरक्षण की मुहिम भी मानते हैं।

शुरुआत 2017 में खेतों और बस्तियों के समीपवर्ती जंगलों में फलों व सब्जियों के बीज बिखरने से हुई थी, पर आशाजनक सफलता नहीं मिली थी। खुले बीजों को पक्षी, बंदर और कीड़े खाते या नष्ट कर देते थे। इससे सीख लेते हुए मिट्टी और गोबर को गूथ कर बनाए गए गोलों में बीजों को रख कर तीन-चार दिन धूप में सुखाया गया। बाद में उन्हें जंगलों में रखा गया। नमी मिलते ही

**जंगली** जानवरों के बढ़ते आक्रमणों से आज उत्तराखंड के गांवों में रहना और खेती करना जोखिम भरा होता जा रहा है। अन्य पहाड़ी इलाकों में भी कमोबेश ऐसी स्थिति बनती दिख रही है। उत्तराखंड में इसके समाधान का एक रास्ता जन सहयोग से जंगलों में खाद्य श्रृंखला को सशक्त करना माना जा रहा है। इसके लिए कुछ समाजसेवी घूम-घूम कर लोगों की नदी-नालों के किनारे गांव, शहर, बस्तियों की सीमाओं पर, नजदीकी जंगलों में बीज बमों से बीज बमबारी करने को प्रेरित कर रहे हैं। उनके अभियान का नाम बीज बम अभियान है, जिसे वे खेल-खेल में पर्यावरण संरक्षण की मुहिम भी मानते हैं।

**जंगली** जानवरों के बढ़ते आक्रमणों से आज उत्तराखंड के गांवों में रहना और खेती करना जोखिम भरा होता जा रहा है। अन्य पहाड़ी इलाकों में भी कमोबेश ऐसी स्थिति बनती दिख रही है। उत्तराखंड में इसके समाधान का एक रास्ता जन सहयोग से जंगलों में खाद्य श्रृंखला को सशक्त करना माना जा रहा है। इसके लिए कुछ समाजसेवी घूम-घूम कर लोगों की नदी-नालों के किनारे गांव, शहर, बस्तियों की सीमाओं पर, नजदीकी जंगलों में बीज बमों से बीज बमबारी करने को प्रेरित कर रहे हैं। उनके अभियान का नाम बीज बम अभियान है, जिसे वे खेल-खेल में पर्यावरण संरक्षण की मुहिम भी मानते हैं।

**जंगली** जानवरों के बढ़ते आक्रमणों से आज उत्तराखंड के गांवों में रहना और खेती करना जोखिम भरा होता जा रहा है। अन्य पहाड़ी इलाकों में भी कमोबेश ऐसी स्थिति बनती दिख रही है। उत्तराखंड में इसके समाधान का एक रास्ता जन सहयोग से जंगलों में खाद्य श्रृंखला को सशक्त करना माना जा रहा है। इसके लिए कुछ समाजसेवी घूम-घूम कर लोगों की नदी-नालों के किनारे गांव, शहर, बस्तियों की सीमाओं पर, नजदीकी जंगलों में बीज बमों से बीज बमबारी करने को प्रेरित कर रहे हैं। उनके अभियान का नाम बीज बम अभियान है, जिसे वे खेल-खेल में पर्यावरण संरक्षण की मुहिम भी मानते हैं।

**गुनगुनी** सर्दियां शुरू हो गई हैं। यही वह मौसम है जब इश्क अपने उरऊज पर होता है। ऐसा क्यों होता है, यह खोज का विषय हो सकता है। मगर आजकल के इश्क में वह बात नहीं दिखती, जो दो दशक पहले होती थी। शायद तकनीक ने इसे जताने, बताने, महसूस करने के तरीके को भी बदल दिया है। जताना, बताना तो समझ में आता है, पर महसूस करने का फर्क समझ के परे है। जबकि कहते हैं, इश्क रूहानी अहसास है। इसे महसूस कर सकते हैं, बयां नहीं। हां, यह जरूर है कि आपके कहने का अंदाज ही सामने वाले को बताता है कि आप उसे चाहते हैं। दरअसल, प्यार जिंदा ईसानों का काम है। चाहे वह कितना भी सख्तदिल क्यों न हो, उसे किसी न किसी के साथ की दरकार हमेशा रहती है। अगर ऐसा न हो तो शायद सृष्टि का विधान ही भंग हो जाएगा। कहते हैं, यह जिसे भी हुआ, वह बेकाम हो गया। इस बात में कुछ हद तक सच्चाई भी है, क्योंकि जब भी आपको कोई आशिक मिलेगा तो वह कुछ बदहवास-सा ही दिखेगा। मगर पहले और आज के दौर में काफी फर्क आ चुका है। लिहाजा,

## स्त्री के विरुद्ध

**देश** के किसी भी कोने में महिलाओं का सार्वजनिक स्थलों पर बेखोफ घूमना तो दूर, कामकाज के लिए बाहर निकलना भी दुश्वार होता जा रहा है। वहशी दरिंदे जहां-तहां गिद्ध नजरें गड़ाए बैठे हैं। हैदराबाद में पशु चिकित्सक युवती को अपने जाल में फंसाने के लिए दरिंदों ने जिस तरह उसकी स्कूटी पंचर की, मदद के बिना उसके साथ गैंगरेप, निर्भम हत्या और फिर शव को दरिंदगी से जलाया गया, उससे यही लगता है कि ये वहशी भेड़िए हैंवानियत की किसी भी हद तक जा सकते हैं। इनकी करतूत पुलिस, प्रशासन, कानून, व्यवस्था और सरकार पर तो प्रश्नचिह्न है ही, समाज के लिए भी चिंतन का विषय है कि हम किस रास्ते पर जा रहे हैं!

शराब के नशे में धुत इन भेड़ियों ने एक सुशिक्षित युवती को ही अपना शिकार नहीं बनाया बल्कि हमारी संस्कृति-सभ्यता को भी तार-तार कर दिया। समाज को यह सोचना होगा कि जहां एक वर्ष में दो बार नौ-नौ दिनों का नवरात्र मना कर कन्या पूजन होता है, हमारे शास्त्र स्त्री शक्ति का महिमा गान करते हैं, वहां महिलाओं के साथ ऐसे हृदय विदारक अपराध क्यों हो रहे हैं? 2017 में भी सामूहिक बलात्कार की 28,947 घटनाएं सामने आईं जिनमें बच्चियों से लेकर बुजुर्ग महिलाओं तक को शिकार बनाया गया। कुछ मामलों में तो उन्हें जिंदा जला दिया गया। लेकिन समाज के लिए यह कोई मुद्दा नहीं है! इस महामारी की ढेरों सामाजिक और मनोवैज्ञानिक वजहें गिनाई जा सकती हैं, लेकिन उससे क्या होगा? हालात हर हाल में बदलने होंगे। सवाल यह भी है कि क्या महज कड़े कानून बना कर हम बलात्कार को रोक सकते हैं?

बीज अंकुरित होते दिखे। परिणाम संतोषप्रद लगे। यह तकनीक जन भागीदारी से ज्यादा से ज्यादा उपयोग में आए, इसलिए उन्होंने बीज गोलों को ऐसा नाम देना चाहा, जिससे इनकी उपादेयता के प्रति उत्सुकता जागृत हो। इन्हें बीज बम कहा जाने लगा। बीज बमों के छिड़काव में प्यादा से प्यादा भागीदारी बढ़ाने का औपचारिक बीज बम अभियान उत्तरकाशी में शुरू किया गया।

इस शुरुआत के बाद उत्तराखंड और अन्य राज्यों में पांच माह की बीज बम यात्राएं की गईं। वर्तमान में सहयोगी संस्थाओं के साथ उत्तराखंड और सात अन्य राज्यों में बीज बम अभियान सक्रिय हैं। साझा गतिविधि के तौर पर इस वर्ष जुलाई के आखिरी हफ्ते में उत्तराखंड और अन्य राज्यों में पांच सौ दो स्थानों पर बीज बम अभियान सप्ताह मानाया गया। इसमें लगभग नब्बे हजार छात्रों और ग्रामीणों ने भाग लिया।

सप्ताह भर जंगलात विभाग, प्रशासन, शिक्षण संस्थाओं, छात्र-छात्राओं और सामाजिक कार्यकर्ताओं ने निर्दिष्ट स्थलों पर बीज बमबारी में उत्साहजनक भागीदारी की। दो जिलों-उत्तरकाशी और देहरादून के जिलाधीशों ने स्वयं बच्चों के साथ बीज बम फेंकने में भागीदारी की। उल्लेखनीय है कि 2019 के पहले कुछ स्थानों पर बच्चों द्वारा स्कूलों के आसपास जो बीज बम डाले गए थे, उनसे उत्पादित सब्जी को मिड डे मिल में अतिरिक्त सब्जी के रूप में प्रयोग भी किया गया था।

इस अभियान को चलाने वाले द्वारिका प्रसाद सेमवाल के अनुभवों से सीख कर बीज बम अभियान में लोगों को यह नहीं पता था कि ऐसे प्रयोग द्वितीय विश्व युद्ध के समय ही जापान में शुरू हो गए थे। अब यह अमेरिका, फ्रांस, इंग्लैंड, केन्या और स्वयं भारत में धारवाड़ में भी हो रहे थे। इनमें हेलीकॉप्टरों और जहाजों का भी उपयोग हो रहा है। यही नहीं, व्यावसायिक कंपनियां अब पैकेटों में भी उनकी तरह के बीज बम, बीज गेंदों के नाम से बेच रही हैं। केन्या में तो व्यावसायिक कंपनियां सत्तर लाख तक बीज गेंद बेचने का दावा करती हैं।

जहां मिस्र में भी सैकड़ों वर्षों से ऐसी पद्धति अपनाई जा रही थी, वहीं इक्कीसवीं शताब्दी में अमेरिका की नासा जैसी संस्था भी इसकी लोकप्रिय बनाने में लगी है। वास्तव में उत्तराखंड में प्रचारित ये बीज बम बीज गेंद ही हैं। दुनिया भी इन्हें बीज गेंद ही कहती है। बीज गेंदें फेंकने को बीज बमबारी का नाम वर्षों से पश्चिम में दिया जाता रहा है। ‘सीड बांविंग’

इस अंदाज का भी ढंग बदल चुका है। एक दौर था जब आशिक अपनी माशूका के इंतजार में कॉलेज के मोड़ पर घंटों बिताते थे। वे क्लास शुरू होने के घंटे भर पहले घर से निकल कर वहां खड़े रहते थे, जहां से उनकी प्रेयसी दूर से आती दिखती थी। जैसे ही उसका दीदार होता, मोशाय सिर से पांव तक बाग-बाग हो जाते। उस समय इनके चेहरे की रौनक देखते ही बनती। शर्म और खुशी के चलते कानों के दोनों सिरें लाल हो उठते।

ऐसा सिर्फ प्रेमी के साथ नहीं होता। प्रेयसी को भी कॉलेज में ही रहने का मन करता, क्योंकि उस समय अमूमन घर पर इनाम काम हो जाता कि जब तक रात न हो जाए, तब तक सोंस लेने की भी फुसंत नहीं मिलती। यही एक समय होता, जब वह आजाद होती। अपने हिसाब से हंस और खिलखिला सकती थी। इन दिनों न जाने क्यों, उसे वह सब अच्छा लगने लगता जो उसके लिए घंटों खड़े होकर इंतजार करने वाले को भाता। जब किसी खास रंग के कुर्ते का वह जिक्र कर देता तब वही-वही पहनती, जब तक लोग बाग टोक न देते। इस समय उसे किसी की बात न बुरी लगती, न भली। कभी-कभी तो रोटी बनाते हुए न जाने कहां गुम हो जाती कि तवे

बलात्कार की घटनाएं हमारी सामाजिक सोच और नैतिकता से जुड़ी हैं। घर में हम जिस ईमानदारी से रहते हैं, जब तक वह नैतिकता खुली सड़क पर नहीं अपनाएगी तब तक बलात्कार की घटनाओं पर विराम लगना असंभव है। सिर्फ कड़ा कानून बनाना इसका समाधान नहीं हो सकता है। एक लड़की जब खुली सड़क से गुजरती है तो उस पर सैकड़ों आंखें टूट पड़ती हैं। लड़कियों को हमने संस्कार, मान व सम्मान की गठरी में बांध रखा है। हमने जो संस्कार बेटों को दिया अगर वही बेटियों को देते तो आज इस बेशर्मी से सिर झुकाने न पड़ते। हालात बेहद बुरे हो चुके हैं। समाज के

या नहीं? यह संविधान का उल्लंघन है और पुलिस को कठोर धाराओं से ऐसे असामाजिक तत्त्वों के खिलाफ मामला दर्ज कर उन्हें जेल भेजना चाहिए। जातिवाद किसी भी रूप में स्वीकार नहीं किया जा सकता। सभी सामाजिक संगठन मिल कर ऐसी घटनाओं व लोगों का प्रतिकार करें तभी समाज को एकजुट रखने के हमारे प्रयास सफल होंगे।

- मंगलेश सोनी, मनावर, धार, मध्यप्रदेश**

**महंगा प्याज**
प्याज की बढ़ती महंगाई से आमजन परेशान है। प्याज की कीमत सौ रुपए पार कर जाना गंभीर चिंता का विषय है और उस पर सरकार से सवाल करना भी स्वाभाविक हो जाता है। लेकिन विडंबना है कि ऐसे गंभीर मुद्दे पर भी देश की वित्तमंत्री ने मजाकिया लहजे में कहा कि प्याज की बढ़ती कीमतों से व्यक्तिगत तौर से उन पर कोई खास असर नहीं पड़ा है, क्योंकि उनका परिवार प्याज-लहसुन जैसी चीजों को खास पसंद नहीं करता है। वित्तमंत्री ने कहा, ‘मैं बहुत ज्यादा प्याज-लहसुन नहीं खाती...इसलिए चिंता न करें। मैं ऐसे परिवार से आती हूं, जिसे प्याज की कोई खास परवाह नहीं है।’

उनका यह जवाब महंगाई की मारी गरीब जनता के जख्मों पर नमक छिड़कने जैसा है। यह देश की गरीब जनता का उपहास उड़ाता हुआ लग रहा है। यदि वित्तमंत्री को इस महंगाई से कोई

वह प्रक्रिया है, जिससे बीज गेंद फेंक कर जमीन पर वनस्पति प्रवेश कराने का प्रयास किया जाता है। विभिन्न नामों से चल रहे हरित अभियानों और वनीकरण में इस पद्धति का उपयोग होता रहा है। ऐसे ही एक अभियान का नाम रहा गुरिल्ला गार्डनिंग। यह वनीकरण में बहुत उपयोगी साबित हुआ। केन्या में हवाई जहाज से भी सीड बांविंग की गई।

बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में। ज्वालामुखीय मृदा उपजाऊ होती थी।

बीज बम अभियान उत्तराखंड के दुर्गम क्षेत्रों के लिए अत्यंत उपयुक्त हैं। उत्तराखंड में जलागम

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

या नहरों की सफाई से निकली भी हो सकती है। पर सूरज के ताप में सुखाने पर आवश्यक है कि बीज गेंदों की मिट्टी ठोस रहे, भरभुरी न हो जाए। मजबूती देने के लिए मिट्टी और ऊर्जरकों के साथ लिए कागज की लुगदी मिलाने का भी प्रयोग किया गया है, विशेषकर उन परिस्थितियों में जब बीज गेंदों को सख्त जमीन पर फेंका जाना हो। बीज गेंदों में अब ऐसा भी मिश्रण होता है, जिसकी निकलती गंध से बीजों के दुश्मन जीवजंतु भाग जाएं।

जंगलों में छिड़काव के लिए ऐसी बीज प्रजातियां चुनी जानी चाहिए, जिनमें पौध आदि की वहां जाकर देखभाल की जरूरत कम से कम पड़े। जिन प्रजातियों को हमने घरेलू बना दिया, खेतों में उगा रहे हैं, उन्हें ज्यादा देखभाल की जरूरत होती है। जैसे जंगली आम, जंगली आंवला, जंगली फूलों की जंगलों में न के बराबर देखभाल मिलती है।

जिन फलों-फूलों के बीज अब वनों में फेंक रहे हैं, वे अगर जंगली ही हों तो सफलता का प्रतिशत बढ़ सकता है। वहां उन प्रजातियों की जरूरत है, जिनमें उद्यानिकी जैसे कार्य न करने हों। क्योंकि जंगलों में उस तरह के कार्यों को करना ज्यादा संभव न होगा। विदेशों में भी बीज गेदों में, जिनसे बमबारी करनी है, जंगली फूलों के बीज ही होते हैं। इससे गरम होती धरती को ठंडा करने में मदद मिलेगी। ग्रीन हाउस गैस कम की जा सकेगी। गरम होती धरा को बचाने की लड़ाई को जल्दी से जल्दी लड़े जाने की अपरिहार्यता के कारण बीज बर्बादी की आशंकाओं के बावजूद इस पद्धति को संज्ञान और वरीयता में रखा ही जाना चाहिए। उत्तराखंड में तो पिघलते हिमनदों, बढ़ते भूस्खलनों को कम करने में

वानस्पतिक आवरण बढ़ाने के लिए बीज बम अभियान निश्चित रूप से एक साक्ष्यक पहल है।

अंततः ऐसे अभियानों में जन सहयोग बहुत जरूरी है, आप कर्मचारी रख कर तो बीज बम नहीं फिकवाएंगे। इसी तरह बीज बम भी विकेंद्रित स्तर पर ही तैयार करने होंगे। स्थानीय मौसम और परिवेश जान कर, जैसे बरसात कब होती है, कितनी होती है, पानी कितना टिकता है, तापमान कैसा और कितना रहता है, सूरज की रोशनी कितनी रहेगी, कब रहेगी, बीजों और बीज बमबारी का समय अगर तय किया जाएगा, तो सफलता की ज्यादा आशा है। क्योंकि बीजों की जड़ें कितनी तेजी से जमीन के भीतर घुस कर मौसम की विपरीत परिस्थितियों को झेल सकती हैं, इसका पूर्व आकलन भी अपेक्षित है।

**बीज बमबारी एक प्रकार की हरित कृषि पद्धति है। इसके लिए जमीन पर औजारों का उपयोग आवश्यक नहीं है। इस तकनीक को दूसरे विश्व युद्ध के समय जापान में प्राकृतिक कृषि को प्रचारित और प्रसारित करने वाले मसानबु फ्यूकोंका ने पुनर्जीवन दिया, विशेषकर ज्वालामुखियों की मिट्टी वाले क्षेत्रों में।**

ही कुछ मशहूर प्रेम किस्से आज भारत के सफल और ख्यातिप्राप्त युगल के रूप में गिने जाते हैं। एकाध तो इस देश के सबसे सफल उद्यमी भी हैं। आज के युवा का प्रेम करने का तरीका उस पीढ़ी से काफी इतर है, क्योंकि इसके पास तकनीक के रूप में ऐसे औजार हैं कि उसे जुदाई, विरह, वेदना का एहसास हो नहीं पाता। लिहाजा, इनका प्रेम की अभिव्यक्ति का तरीका भी अलग है। जैसे उस दौर का गाना ‘मिलती है जिंदगी में मोहब्बत कभी कभी...’ आज के समय में ‘इश्क कमीना...’ हो जाता है। उस दौर में प्रेयसी को गाली देने के बारे में प्रेमी सोचते तक नहीं थे, जबकि ये आज वाट्सऐप के समय आम बात है। यह सब आज के चलन के मुताबिक मॉल कल्चर में आसानी से उपलब्ध है। यहां ये तभी तक प्रासंगिक दिखते हैं, जब तक उनसे बेहतर बाजार में कोई मॉडल उपलब्ध नहीं हो जाता। जैसे ही उसका नया संस्करण बाजार में आता है, वैसे ही उसकी तरफ आकर्षण बढ़ जाता है।

ठीक यही स्थिति आज के नए प्रेमियों में देखने को मिल रही है। कुछ अपवादस्वरूप ही, जो बिना किसी की परवाह किए इसके बुनियादी स्वरूप को बचाए हुए हैं, बिना खाप पंचायत के डर से। निस्संदेह वे इस दौर में बधाई के पात्र हैं।

फर्क नहीं पड़ता तो इसका यह अर्थ कतई नहीं कि आमजन को भी फर्क नहीं पड़ता।

● ***मंजर आलम, रामपुर डेहरू, मथेपुग, बिहार***

### पोषण या जहर

इन दिनों मध्याह्न भोजन योजना अपनी उपलब्धियों को लेकर नहीं बल्कि दूषित खाना परोसने, भ्रष्टाचार व सामाजिक भेदभाव की वजह से भी चर्चा में रहती है। कभी खाने में छिपकली तो कभी चूहा पाया जाता है। कभी बासी खाना परोसा जाता है तो कभी सड़ा हुआ और कई बार दलित रसोइया होने पर विवाद होता है। हाल ही में उत्तर प्रदेश के मुजफ्फरनगर जिले के मुस्तफाबाद पंचेंडा गांव में जनता इंटर कॉलेज के बच्चों को मध्याह्न भोजन परोसा गया जिसमें मरा हुआ चूहा मिला। यह खाना खाकर बच्चे बीमार हो गए। उत्तर प्रदेश में करीब 1,68,768 विद्यालय ऐसे हैं जहां बच्चों को मध्याह्न भोजन दिया जाता है जिसकी पौष्टिकता सर्वविदित है। आए दिन इसमें अनियमितताओं की खबरें राज्य के हर कोने से आती हैं।

यह स्थिति तब है जब सरकार हजारों करोड़ रुपए इस योजना पर न सिर्फ खर्च कर रही है बल्कि निगरानी और क्रियान्वयन के लिए वरिष्ठ आईएएस अधिकारी के नेतृत्व में एक प्राधिकरण है। इसके सोशल ऑडिटिंग की व्यवस्था भी लागू है। फिर भी यह योजना बिल्कुल भगवान भरोसे है। सरकारी स्कूल में केवल गरीब परिवारों के बच्चे पढ़ते हैं शायद इसलिए भी इसे कोई ज्यादा गंभीरता लेता नहीं है। बस नीचे से ऊपर तक कमीशन लेने की होड़ रहती है। इस योजना में भ्रष्टाचार करने वाले अधिकारियों और कर्मचारियों पर निश्चित ही सख्त से सख्त कार्रवाई होनी चाहिए ताकि अधिकारी और कर्मचारी मध्याह्न भोजन को मुफ्त में दिया गया खाना न समझ कर इसे बच्चों का हक समझें।

● ***सुनील कुमार सिंह, मेरठ, उत्तर प्रदेश***



## बिज़नेस स्टैंडर्ड

वर्ष 12 अंक 249

## बजट होगा निर्धारक

**भारतीय** रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई) की मौद्रिक नीति समिति (एमपीसी) ने गुरुवार को नीतिगत रीपो दर में कटौती न करके वित्तीय बाजार को चौंका दिया। हाल की तिमाहियों में आर्थिक वृद्धि दर में तेजी से गिरावट आई है जिसके बाद एक बार फिर दरों में कटौती की अपेक्षा बढ़ गई थी। परंतु समिति के पास भी कटौती न करने की अहम वजह थी। जैसा

कि इस समाचार पत्र ने पहले भी कहा था, दरों में कटौती के पक्ष में एकमात्र दलील यह थी कि यथास्थिति वाली नीति वित्तीय बाजार में घबराहट पैदा कर सकती है।

यह सही है कि आर्थिक विस्तार की गति पिछली कुछ तिमाहियों में तेजी से कम हुई है। यह भी कहा जा सकता है कि एक बड़ी अर्थव्यवस्था के रूप में भारत मुद्रास्फीति के

लक्ष्यों को लेकर कुछ ज्यादा ही चिंतित है। खासतौर पर तब जबकि अन्य केंद्रीय बैंक अपने प्रभाव को लेकर स्वयं सवाल उठा रहे हैं। परंतु आरबीआई ने अपने इरादे स्पष्ट कर दिए हैं। वह मुद्रास्फीति से जंग जारी रखना चाहता है। वर्ष की दूसरी छमाही के लिए उसने मुद्रास्फीति को लेकर अपना अनुमान भी संशोधित करके 5.1 से 4.7 फीसदी कर दिया है। हालांकि शीर्ष मुद्रास्फीति के लिए खाद्य कीमतें ही प्रमुख कारक हैं और केंद्रीय बैंक को आशा है कि अगले वित्त वर्ष की पहली छमाही में इसमें कमी आ जाएगी लेकिन फिर भी उसने अधिक स्पष्टता के लिए प्रतीक्षा करना बेहतर समझा। आम घरों के मुद्रास्फीति संबंधी अनुमान यह संकेत देते हैं कि मुद्रास्फीतिक दबाव की अनदेखी करने के

अपने जोखिम हैं। इसके अलावा खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति का पूर्वानुमान लगाना हमेशा कठिन होता है। केंद्रीय बैंक द्वारा हाल के वर्षों में मुद्रास्फीति के अतिरंजित अनुमान की एक वजह खाद्य मुद्रास्फीति का सही अनुमान न लगा पाना भी रहा है। यकीनन वह ऐसे समय पर नीतिगत चूक नहीं करना चाहेगा जब खाद्य कीमतें बढ़ रही हैं। इसके अतिरिक्त एक ओर जहां आरबीआई गवर्नर शक्तिकांत दास नीति प्रस्तुत किए जाने के बाद मीडिया के साथ चर्चा में वास्तविक ब्याज दरों पर सवाल का जवाब देने से बचे, वहीं संभव है कि एमपीसी की चर्चा में इसका जिक्र मिले।

एमपीसी ने मौजूदा आर्थिक हालात में सरकारी नीति पर अधिक स्पष्टता के लिए बजट की प्रतीक्षा करने का एकदम सही निर्णय

लिया है। हालांकि केंद्रीय बैंक राजकोषीय परिस्थितियों को लेकर अपनी चिंताएं स्पष्ट रूप से प्रकट करने से बचा है लेकिन राजस्व के मोर्चे पर सरकार की स्थिति निश्चित रूप से चिंताजनक है। ऐसे में केंद्रीय बैंक को राजकोषीय नीति और मौद्रिक नीति के बीच संतुलन रखने के लिए प्रयास करना होगा। बहरहाल, नीतिगत दरों में कटौती का शायद वांछित असर नहीं होता क्योंकि अधिकांश निवेशक सरकार से यह अपेक्षा नहीं करते कि वह घोषित राजकोषीय घाटा लक्ष्य पर टिकी रहेगी।

आखिर में, हालांकि बॉन्ड बाजार के एक हिस्से ने चालू दौर में नीतिगत दरों में कटौती को लेकर प्रतिक्रिया दी किंतु बैंकों की ऋण दर में इसका पारेषण बहुत धीमी गति से हुआ।

# मोदी सरकार के लिए मुफीद है राहुल बजाज की टिप्पणी



दिल्ली डायरी

ए के भट्टाचार्य

चुनौतियों से निपटने के सरकार के तौर तरीकों पर केंद्रित नहीं थी। बजाज उस बॉम्बे क्लब के संस्थापक सदस्य थे जिसने सन 1990 के आरंभ में मांग की थी आर्थिक खुलापन आने के बाद देश के घरेलू उद्योग जगत के समक्ष उत्पन्न चुनौतियों से बचाव सुनिश्चित किया जाए। बजाज मोदी सरकार के टैरिफ बढ़ाने या दुनिया की सबसे बड़ी व्यापार व्यवस्था बन सकने वाले व्यापक क्षेत्रीय आर्थिक साझेदारी (आरसेप) से बाहर आने को लेकर असहज नहीं थे।

आलोचना मोदी सरकार की आर्थिक नीतियों पर केंद्रित नहीं थी बल्कि वह इस बात के खिलाफ थे कि सरकार उद्योग जगत की प्रतिपुष्टि सुनने को तैयार नहीं है। यहां तक कि उद्योग जगत अब आलोचना करने से भी घबरा रहा है। बायोर्कॉन की चेयरपर्सन और प्रबंध निदेशक किरण मजूमदार शां ने बजाज की बातों का समर्थन किया और आशा जताई कि सरकार अब उद्योग जगत से इस विषय पर चर्चा करेगी कि आर्थिक वृद्धि में सुधार कैसे किया जाए। शां ने सोशल मीडिया पर अपनी टिप्पणी में कहा कि अब तक सरकार अर्थव्यवस्था की आलोचना नहीं सुनना चाह रही थी। ऐसे में बजाज दरअसल यह कहना चाह रहे थे कि मोदी सरकार को उद्योग जगत के नेताओं और सत्ता प्रतिष्ठान के बीच संवाद कायम करना चाहिए। वह कारोबारियों की यह इच्छा सामने रख रहे थे कि सरकार और कारोबारियों के बीच संबद्धता नए सिरे से तय होनी चाहिए। मोदी सरकार के पहले कार्यकाल के शुरुआती दिनों में इन शर्तों को नए ढंग से तय किया गया था। उद्योग जगत ने भारतीय जनता पार्टी (भाजपा) सरकार की सराहना की थी। उसे लग रहा था कि प्रधानमंत्री मोदी और अधिक

आर्थिक सुधार लाएंगे। अपेक्षाओं के अनुरूप मोदी ने भूमि अधिग्रहण कानून में संशोधन का कड़ा प्रयास किया लेकिन बढ़ते राजनीतिक प्रतिरोध के चलते उन्हें पीछे हटना पड़ा। पहले कार्यकाल के बचे हुए वक्त में मोदी ने वस्तु एवं सेवा कर, अचल संपत्ति नियमन और ऋणशोधन अक्षमता एवं दिवालिया निस्तारण जैसे कई अहम सुधार किए। दूसरे कार्यकाल में भी मोदी सरकार ने कॉर्पोरेशन कर दर में कमी और महत्वाकांक्षी निजीकरण कार्यक्रम के माध्यम से साहसी कदम उठाए।

परंतु यह स्पष्ट होता जा रहा था कि मोदी सरकार उद्योग जगत के करीब दिखना नहीं चाहती। इसलिए क्योंकि उद्योग जगत के बहुत करीब दिखने के राजनीतिक जोखिम हैं और इससे भाजपा को राजनीतिक नुकसान हो सकता था। ऐसी स्थिति में बजाज का यह कहना कि उद्योग जगत के लोग सरकार की आलोचना करने से डरते हैं, दरअसल भाजपा की इस राजनीतिक छवि को मजबूत करता है कि वह उद्योग जगत से दूर है। यहां तक कि 2019 के आम चुनाव में ज्यादा बहुमत से सत्ता में आने के बाद भी भाजपा नेतृत्व निरंतर अपनी राजनीतिक पूंजी और छाप मजबूत करने में लगा हुआ है।

ऐसा इसलिए कि महाराष्ट्र और हरियाणा के चुनावों में भाजपा का प्रदर्शन उसके लिए एक झटका साबित हुआ। उसे आगामी विधानसभा चुनावों में जबरदस्त जीत की आवश्यकता है। वह एक ऐसी सरकार के रूप में दिखना चाहती है जिसके उद्योग जगत के साथ करीबी रिश्ते नहीं हैं। नतीजा ? उद्योग जगत के लोगों का सरकारी नीतियों के खिलाफ बोलने में आना आगामी चुनावों में उसे राजनीतिक रूप से लाभ पहुंचा सकता है। बजाज की बातों ने इस छवि को मजबूत किया है। तथ्य यह है कि उद्योग जगत और सरकार के करीबी रिश्ते भाजपा को चुनाव नहीं जिता सकते। इसके विपरीत उद्योग जगत यदि भाजपा सरकार के साथ सहज है और उसके साथ मित्रतापूर्ण रिश्ता रखता है तो इसका पार्टी के चुनावी प्रदर्शन पर बुरा असर हो सकता है। विपक्षी दल मोदी सरकार को लेकर बजाज की आलोचना से खुश हो सकते हैं लेकिन भाजपा को इसे राजनीतिक वरदान मानना चाहिए।



अजय मोहंती

# आर्थिक रसूरव का कूटनीतिक प्रयोग

भारत के लिए इस बदलती कूटनीतिक शैली के अपने जोरिवम हैं। यदि इससे ठीक तरीके से नहीं निपटा गया तो गंभीर वैश्विक प्रतिभागी होने की भारत की छवि दांव पर लग जाएगी। विस्तार से बता रहे हैं **हर्ष वी पंत**

इसमें दो राय नहीं कि बीते कुछ वर्षों में भारतीय कूटनीति का तेजी से उदभव हुआ है। कुछ मायनों में यह वैसा ही है जैसा कि इसे होना चाहिए। प्रभावी कूटनीति का अर्थ ही होता है तमाम तरह के दबावों और अन्य परिस्थितियों में समय पर उचित प्रतिक्रिया देना। हाल के महीनों में देश की कूटनीति में एक नए किस्म की धार देखने को मिली है। यह देश के हितों को नुकसान पहुंचाने वालों से खुलकर निपटने को तैयार दिखी है। जम्मू कश्मीर में अनुच्छेद 370 का खात्मा इसका प्रत्यक्ष उदाहरण है। ऐसा करके सरकार ने न केवल इस क्षेत्र का संवैधानिक स्वरूप बदल दिया बल्कि आजादी के समय से चली आ रही यथास्थिति भी समाप्त कर दी। उम्मीद के मुताबिक ही इस निर्णय के बाद वैश्विक स्तर पर इसकी प्रतिध्वनि सुनाई दे रही है।

ज्यादातर देश भारत के साथ सहानुभूति रखते हैं और वे भारत की इस बात से सहमत हैं कि कश्मीर भारत का आंतरिक मसला है। वहीं कुछ देशों ने पाकिस्तान का पक्ष भी लिया। चीन एक बड़ी समस्या बना हुआ है। उसने कहा कि भारत ने अपने घरेलू कानून में एकतरफा बदलाव करके और

प्रशासनिक निर्णयों के माध्यम से उसकी संप्रभुता और उसके हितों को नुकसान पहुंचाया है। कुछ अन्य देश भी पाकिस्तान के साथ आए।

गत माह संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासभा में तुर्की के राष्ट्रपति रेंसिप तैयप एर्दोगन ने भारत के इस कदम की आलोचना की और पाकिस्तान के नजरिये का समर्थन करते हुए कहा कि कश्मीर के लोग लगभग बंदी की स्थिति में हैं और 80 लाख लोग घरों से बाहर तक नहीं निकल पा रहे हैं। उन्होंने कहा कि इस स्थिति में समस्या का समाधान न्याय और समता पूर्ण संवाद के माध्यम से ही हो सकता है न कि टकराव से। एर्दोगन ने यह भी कहा कि दक्षिण एशिया की स्थिरता और समृद्धि कश्मीर मुद्दे से अलग नहीं हो सकती।

#### आक्रामक कूटनीति

भारतीय विदेश मंत्रालय की प्रतिक्रिया एकदम ठोस थी। उसने तुर्की की सरकार से कहा कि वह कश्मीरी की जमीनी परिस्थितियों की सही समझ पैदा करने के बाद ही इस विषय पर आगे कोई टिप्पणी करे। उससे कहा गया कि कश्मीर मसला भारत का आंतरिक मसला है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र

महासभा से इतर प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने तुर्की के प्रतिद्वंद्वी ग्रीस, साइप्रस और आर्मेनिया के राष्ट्राध्यक्षों से मुलाकात की। जाहिर है एर्दोगन इस संदेश की अनदेखी नहीं कर पाए होंगे।

भारत ने न केवल प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी को प्रस्तावित तुर्की यात्रा को रद्द कर दिया बल्कि तुर्की की कंपनी एनाडोलु शिपयार्ड को भारत में रक्षा संबंधी कारोबार करने से भी रोक दिया गया। हिंदुस्तान शिपयार्ड लिमिटेड ने एनाडोलु शिपयार्ड को भारतीय नौसेना के दो अरब डॉलर मूल्य के सहयोगी जहाजी बेड़े की परियोजना में तकनीकी साझेदार के रूप में चुना था। परंतु तुर्कों और पाकिस्तान के रिश्तों के चलते भारत को इस अहम परियोजना में उसे शामिल करने को लेकर अपनी अनिच्छा दर्शाने पर मजबूर किया। इसके बाद भारत ने उत्तरी सीरिया में तुर्की की सैन्य कार्रवाई की आलोचना की। भारत ने कहा कि इससे क्षेत्र की स्थिरता और आतंक के खिलाफ लड़ाई को खतरा साझेदार के रूप में चुना था। परंतु उसी से कहा कि वह सीरिया की संप्रभुता और उसकी क्षेत्रीय अखंडता का सम्मान करे।

मलेशिया द्वारा कश्मीर मसले पर पाकिस्तान का समर्थन करने पर भी भारत

### आपका पक्ष

#### साइबर क्राइम के खिलाफ उठे आवाज

वर्तमान में तकनीक ने जिस तेजी के साथ जीवन में दखल देना शुरू किया है उसी तेजी से मानवीय मूल्यों पर असर दिखाई पड़ रहा है। व्यक्ति में आदर्शों, मूल्यों और ज्ञान-विज्ञान की अथाह पूंजी के साथ-साथ मानवीय कुंठाएं और आपराधिक व्यवहार भी गति पकड़ रही है। जाहिर तौर पर इसका सबसे ज्यादा शिकार आधी आबादी हो रही है। ऑनलाइन प्रताड़ना, पहचान की चोरी, ईमेल स्पूफिंग, साइबर स्टॉकिंग और ऑनलाइन बुलिंग जैसे शब्दों का चलन अब हमारे बीच आम होने की स्थिति में है। आजकल सुरक्षा के सवाल को लेकर महिलाएं कहीं भी निश्चित नहीं हैं। महिलाएं न तो असल दुनिया में और न ही आभासी दुनिया में खुद को सुरक्षित महसूस करती हैं। महिलाओं के लिए अभद्र भाषा के इस्तेमाल से लेकर शारीरिक शोषण तक किसी भी अनहोनी के होने की दहशत और आशंका हर पल मौजूद है। ऑनलाइन प्रताड़ना



की चपेट में अधिकतर ऐसी महिलाएं आती हैं जो सतही जानकारीयों के साथ-साथ से मायावी दुनिया में जी रही हैं। ऐसी महिलाएं जो तकनीक की दुनिया का हिस्सा तो बन जाती हैं लेकिन अपनी सुरक्षा के हिस्से का उपयोग करना नहीं सीख पातीं हैं। अर्थात ऐसी महिलाएं तकनीक और कानून द्वारा दी गई सुरक्षा सुविधाओं से

वाकिफ नहीं होती हैं। यह जरूरी नहीं कि हर मामले में पीड़िता को उलझाया ही गया हो। कई मामलों में पीड़िता भावुक, स्वप्नदर्शी और महत्त्वकांक्षी महिलाएं खुद उलझ

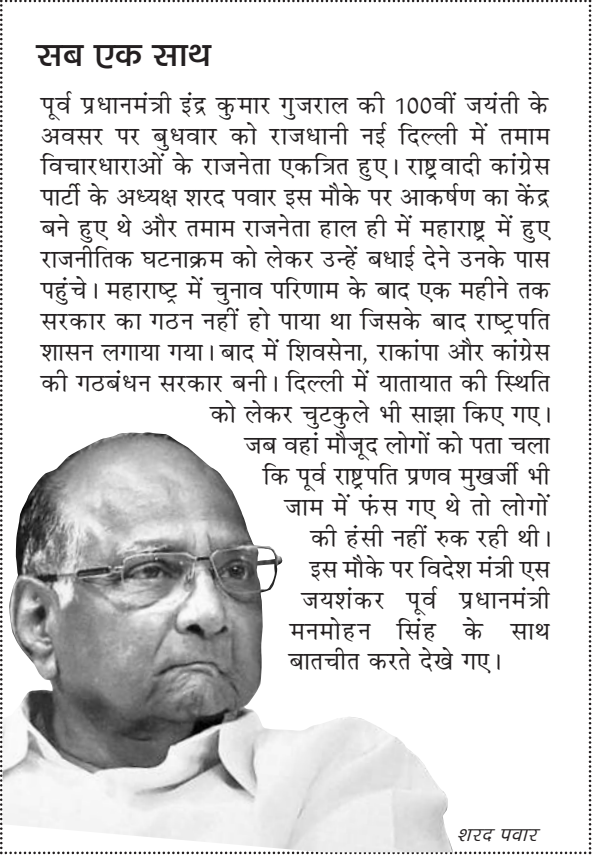
**महिलाओं को अपने ऊपर हो रहे साइबर क्राइम के खिलाफ आवाज बुलंद करनी चाहिए**

पाठक अपनी राय हमें इस पते पर भेज सकते हैं : संपादक, बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड, 4, बहादुर शाह जफर मार्ग, नई दिल्ली - 110002. आप हमें ईमेल भी कर सकते हैं : lettershindi@bsmail.in
उस जगह का उल्लेख अवश्य करें, जहां से आप ईमेल कर रहे हैं।

### कानाफूसी

#### फंड की कमी

मध्य प्रदेश के मुख्यमंत्री कमल नाथ अतीत में कह चुके हैं कि गत वर्ष दिसंबर में जब कांग्रेस ने सरकार बनाई तब प्रदेश की वित्तीय स्थिति एकदम खस्ता हालत में थी। एक वर्ष बीतने के बाद भी हालात में सुधार नहीं हुआ है। सरकार अभी भी विकास परियोजनाओं के लिए धन जुटाने की लिए संघर्ष कर रही है। प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना-ग्रामीण, भोपाल-इंदौर सिक्ससेलन एक्सप्रेसवे और तमाम परियोजनाएं फंड के इंतजार में स्थगित हैं। लोक स्वास्थ्य अभियांत्रिकी विभाग, लोक निर्माण विभाग एवं जल संसाधन विभाग की भी यही हालत है। सरकार ने पैसे के अभाव में भोपाल-इंदौर एक्सप्रेसवे का विचार ही त्याग दिया है क्योंकि परियोजना के लिए करीब 6,000 करोड़ रुपये की आवश्यकता है। इससे पहले जुलाई 2019 में राज्य का बजट प्रस्तुत करने के बाद वित्त मंत्री तरुण भनोत ने पिछली भाजपा सरकार की शाहखर्ची की जमकर आलोचना की थी।



शरद पवार

#### सब एक साथ

पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री इंद्र कुमार गुजराल की 100वीं जयंती के अवसर पर बुधवार को राजधानी नई दिल्ली में तमाम विचारधाराओं के राजनेता एकत्रित हुए। राष्टवादी कांग्रेस पार्टी के अध्यक्ष शरद पवार इस मौके पर आकर्षण का केंद्र बने हुए थे और तमाम राजनेता हाल ही में महाराष्ट्र में हुए राजनीतिक घटनाक्रम को लेकर उन्हें बधाई देने उनके पास पहुंचे। महाराष्ट्र में चुनाव परिणाम के बाद एक महीने तक सरकार का गठन नहीं हो पाया था जिसके बाद राष्ट्रपति शासन लगाया गया। बाद में शिवसेना, राकांपा और कांग्रेस की गठबंधन सरकार बनी। दिल्ली में यातायात की स्थिति को लेकर चुटकुले भी साझा किए गए। जब वहां मौजूद लोगों को पता चला कि पूर्व राष्ट्रपति प्रणव मुखर्जी भी जाम में फंस गए थे तो लोगों की हंसी नहीं रुक रही थी। इस मौके पर विदेश मंत्री एस जयशंकर पूर्व प्रधानमंत्री मनमोहन सिंह के साथ बातचीत करते देखे गए।

का कारण बेमौसम बारिश, मंडियों से प्याज की आवक नाहीं होना, प्याज सड़ जाना आदि बताया जा रहा है। इसी साल के शुरुआत में किसान प्याज के उचित दाम नहीं मिलने से खफा होकर सड़कों पर प्याज फेंक रहे थे। देश के विभिन्न जगहों पर किसान सड़कों पर प्याज बिखेर कर विरोध जता रहे थे और प्याज की उचित दाम की मांग कर रहे थे। आज भी प्याज के 100 रुपये से अधिक होने पर इसका लाभ किसानों को नहीं मिल पा रहा है। किसानों से लेकर उपभोक्ताओं के बीच बिचौलिया तंत्र ही प्याज के बड़े दाम का लाभ उठाता रहा है। अगर उस वक्त सरकार किसानों से उचित मूल्य पर प्याज खरीद कर भंडारण करती तो आज प्याज के दाम इतने नहीं बढ़े होते। अतः सरकार को किसानों से अनाज की सीधे खरीदारी कर भंडारण करना चाहिए जो भविष्य के लिए सुरक्षित हो जाए। इससे अनाज की कीमत साल भर समान रहेगी तथा अनाज की कालाबाजारी तथा बिचौलिये पर लगाम लगेगी।

*राजेश कुमार, नई दिल्ली*





# THE EDITORIAL PAGE

WORDLY WISE

I THINK IT'S IMPORTANT TO LIVE IN A NICE COUNTRY RATHER THAN A POWERFUL ONE.

— KURT VONNEGUT

*The Indian* **EXPRESS**

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

## Babri to New India

My parents bequeathed to me a lived liberalism. From December 6, 1992, that virtue, that country, is besieged



MUKULIKA BANERJEE

I HAD A dream on the night of December 6, 1992, the day the Babri Masjid was destroyed. It went like this:

*My parents and I are travelling in an open top safari-style jeep. We are looking over the sides, scanning the trees on either side of the rough road, searching for something. And then one of us shouts to indicate they had spotted something and we come to a halt and scramble out. Pulling the thick undergrowth aside, we find what we are looking for — large white human bones, that resemble the rounded form of Henry Moore's sculptures. My father says, "there he is, there is Gandhi. We can take him back with us now". As we lift the pieces carefully, we realise that in our frantic search we had unknowingly crossed a line, a border of some sorts, across which "Gandhi" lay. Realising we would not be allowed to bring him back from across the border, we lower the pieces we had so eagerly picked up and drive back the way we came, looking over our shoulders and thinking how close we had come to the treasure we could not claim.*

I have only once in my life had a dream like this, but it has stayed with me forever. I remember narrating it to my doctoral supervisor in his Oxford office. Even though its vividness felt real, it had come across as embarrassingly heavy with meaning and symbolism in the telling and so I rarely spoke of it again.

But the dream has never gone away and this year especially, it gives expression to inchoate emotions that have dominated the last few months. This will be the first December of my life without my parents. My mother died exactly two years ago, on my parents' 56th wedding anniversary and my father at the end of May this year, a week after the new Indian government took office. With them, they also seemed to have taken an India that they had given my generation and me. An India that had a sense of common purpose even if labelled "under-developed", confident if poor, an India that treasured the memories of hard-won independence and the thrill of the Indian flag hoisted on flagpoles for the first time, an India that stood tall but did not look down on others. My parents were the sort of Indians that made India a knowledgeable, modest, hard-

working, understated, respected and likeable country. That India has now been replaced by a "new India", we are told.

We were an ordinary professional family with few luxuries as the bulk of the household budget was spent on school fees and hosting relatives, for whom our government bungalow near New Delhi railway station was a god-sent waiting room as they "broke" long train journeys, went to job interviews or waited to rent their own homes. Our paternal grandmother was a more permanent (and more welcome) member of the household, who gently carried on her iron Brahmanical discipline of early morning baths, fasting and puja, regulating her life by the five azaans from the mosque behind our house.

Eid was a time of feasting as grateful patients of my father's, drawn from the ragged underclass of mechanics and tailors of old Delhi, arrived at our home with delectable offerings of meat and biryani. My strictly vegetarian grandmother did not taste these of course but she delighted with us in the sudden luxury and happily tasted the *sevai* from the kitchen of Dr Ahmed, the principal of Zakir Hussain College who lived next door. Christmas was always spent with Stella Aunty, my mother's best friend and colleague from the elite school where my mother taught physics.

My parents were not, however, members of the elite of Lutyens Delhi. They had never travelled abroad, they spoke English only when they had to, and always felt slightly out of place in snobbish Delhi where your address, accent and precise provenance of the handloom you were draped in were critical markers of social distinction. They lived there because that is where they had found work, because they were devotees of Delhi's wonderful classical music concerts and most of all because they knew the city offered untold treasures for their daughters' growing interests in everything from fantastic universities, world cinema festivals and ballet lessons. They delighted in our rapidly growing horizons, fluency in English and our social ease in the big city for they knew that it would open doors of opportunity and do justice to the unconventional upbringing they had given us.

Dinner time was marked by each of us sharing stories from our day, of people, food,

places and ideas we had encountered and we learnt of their lives in the small towns they had grown up in, how they had to learn to adjust to other kinds of Indians when they had started their working lives and during my father's years in the Army, and how much richer life had got the more they embraced new influences. Their commentary on the anecdotes also showed that not everything in our country was good and that it was important to stand up to patriarchy, religious dogma and the inhumanity of caste, for each of which they had zero tolerance.

These were never presented as ideological statements, although my mother occasionally cited characters and writings from Bengali literature to illustrate her thoughts, we learnt mostly from what they did and how they led their lives. For instance, we noticed that my mother patronised an old woman vendor even though her vegetables looked sad, we heard that my father had thought nothing of first cleaning the filthy foot of a fishmonger, when during a shopping trip "Doctor saab" was requested to examine a wound, and we saw how the domestic staff they employed over the years left better educated and more confident than when they arrived. What my parents imparted to us, in imperceptible ways, were some basic virtues of civility and warmth, to be fearless in acting against injustice wherever one encountered it, to shun bigotry and to be quiet in pride.

It was perhaps those virtues that I had gone in search of in the dream. My imagination had given them the physical form of Henry Moore limbs and the name "Gandhi". But in essence, I realise now, the dream had communicated a message: That if young men armed with just axes, hammers and uncontrollable rage could reduce a 16th-century mosque to rubble as they had done that day, the bare bones of the virtues required to challenge them might lie beyond the boundary of time.

In my dream, my parents had been with me, but now their legacy of a liberalism of practice is my only companion as I seek to reclaim those virtues.

*Banerjee is director, LSE South Asia Centre and author of Why India Votes?*

## TWO-NATION CITIZEN

Citizenship Bill violates basic structure of Constitution, very foundation of the Republic. Highest court should take note

FOR THE FIRST time in India, citizenship will be defined, for some men, women and children, in religious terms. That is the terrible — and terrifying — burden of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2019 cleared by the Union cabinet on Wednesday, which is all set to be introduced in Parliament this session. Going by the indications from a subdued and quiescent Opposition so far, this bill will be passed by both Houses this time, unlike in the previous Lok Sabha when the Opposition forced it to a joint Parliamentary Committee, with several parties submitting dissent notes. That will be a travesty. From the very beginning, this bill has alarmed all those who have stakes in peace and calm in the Northeast — in its present version, it exempts large swathes of it from its provisions, so the dangers posed to a region already roiled by the cloddish National Register of Citizens process can be said to have been blunted somewhat. But the bill, in all its versions, raises a wider, more fundamental worry. By amending the Citizenship Act 1955 to grant citizenship to illegal immigrants who are Hindus, Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Parsis, and Christians from Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Pakistan, while shutting India's doors on all those who are Muslim, because they are Muslim, the proposed law violates the fundamental right to equality assured by the Indian Constitution, and its explicit prohibition of discrimination on the basis of religion. It also undermines the very foundation of the Republic in a spacious and plural idea that was nurtured and nourished by the freedom movement, an idea that refuted the two-nation theory that led to the creation of Pakistan.

The proposed citizenship law has the potential to make the NRC process, which has ignited more faultlines than it has settled in Assam, and which the Modi government promises, or threatens, to expand nation-wide, into little more than a witch-hunt against Muslims. The NRC's fig leaf has been that it aims to settle long festering questions of belonging and identity in a region with a history of demographic turbulence. The proposed law's own fig leaf is that it gives succour and refuge to minorities that are persecuted or fear persecution in Muslim-majority neighbouring countries. But if the citizenship bill is born of empathy for the vulnerable and the persecuted, why not extend it to the Rohingya from Myanmar, or the Ahmadiyas from Pakistan?

It is not just the Northeast, nor even only the minorities, which must worry about the citizenship bill becoming law. Its march to formalisation must concern all Indians who fear that this country will lose an inextricable and precious part of itself if it were to define itself as a nation with two kinds of citizens and citizenship, or if it is seen as one by its neighbours and the world. It must provoke the Supreme Court, which monitored the NRC process that the government at the state and the Centre have all but rejected because its results told an inconvenient truth. Can the nation's highest court countenance such a drastic and unconstitutional change in the character of the nation, in its very basic structure?

## NO CUT IN TIME

MPC opts for status quo, citing inflation concerns. But with growth slowing sharply, it should have continued to ease

IN AN UNEXPECTED move, the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) voted unanimously in favour of leaving the policy rate unchanged. Considering that the economic slowdown has been more severe than expected, and that till the last policy, the overriding concern was to arrest it, this decision is not only surprising, but also suggests a certain incoherence of approach. Though the MPC has noted that the policy space exists for future action, with growth unlikely to pick up meaningfully in the near term, and considering the lags in transmission, rather than adopt a wait and watch approach, it should have stayed with its earlier stance of reducing policy rates further.

Several reasons have been flagged to justify maintaining status quo. The explicit concern was the recent spurt in inflation and inflation expectations. But, the current rise in inflation, led primarily by high food prices, is likely to be transitory. In fact, according to the RBI's own projections, it is expected to decline to 3.8-4 per cent in the first half of 2020-21. Even the rise in inflation expectations is driven by food inflation and is likely to abate once it moderates. And while there is also concern over a rise in core inflation, owing to higher telecom tariffs, this is also likely to be a one-off event. In arguing that the pause is due to concerns over inflation, the MPC has indicated that it is interpreting its inflation targeting mandate too narrowly. Rather than using the flexibility provided by the 4 plus/minus 2 per cent band, it has chosen to target a fixed rate.

The other, perhaps more pressing, concern before the MPC is the Centre's fiscal position. The worry that higher government spending, financed by borrowings, could push up inflation and lead to a hardening of rates could have played a major part in this decision. It is probable that the MPC wants to utilise the policy space available to it once more clarity over the government's borrowing programme emerges. Though the governor has repeatedly said that the MPC is waiting for the full impact of the previous rate cuts to play out, and that the timing of cuts is important, given the delays in transmission, a more prudent approach would have been to front load the rate cuts.

## EXIT OF THE GOOSE

With natural pace and deep reservoirs of determination and unflappability, Bob Willis forged a terrific if unsung career

IN HIS OWN assessment, Bob Willis was a "born pessimist". Before every Test match, he would run his blue eyes over the newspapers, looking for pieces that criticised him. Two days before his greatest feat in Test cricket — an 8/43 demolition of an Australian — he devoured the criticism of his bowling. He had gone wicketless on a helpful surface and was reading stinging critiques the next day in the newspapers. "I thought this would be the last time I would play for England," he later revealed.

If Botham emerged from the most miraculous Ashes triumphs as a new hero for England, Willis blended into the backdrop as he always had. He shied away from the lime-light, rarely partied, barely hogged the headlines for feats beside his exploits with the ball, turned down lucrative offers to join the Kerry Packer series and a rebel tour to South Africa. Apart from the occasional bust-ups with reporters, he was a quiet man, hooked to Bob Dylan songs and poems when he was not playing. So obsessed was he with the American folk-rock artiste that he inserted a D into his surname and grew his hair long.

He didn't have a repertoire of tricks, had what the great Freddie Trueman observed to be "an ugly action" akin to the flapping of a goose (hence the nickname Goose), a meandering run-up, a frail body, wonky ankles, and long limbs. But what he had was the natural pace and deep reservoirs of determination and unflappability, which forged a terrific if unsung career, as the haul of 325 wickets at an average of 25.20 in 90 Tests would testify. He could never purchase a 10-for, but several of his 16 five-fors have come in trying circumstances and unforgiving conditions. None was as memorable as his effort in Bangalore, when he ripped through a strong Indian middle-order and returned with 6/53.



D RAJA

ON DECEMBER 6, 1956, B R Ambedkar attained immortality. Jawaharlal Nehru said that, "B R Ambedkar deserves to be remembered always by us because of his fight against social injustice. The great service that he had rendered in framing the constitution of India".

On December 6, 1992, the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya was demolished. The demolition was a clear break from what our national liberation movement and Constitution stood for. Hindus and Muslims fought shoulder-to-shoulder against imperialists. The seeds of distrust and disharmony were sown in those days resulted in Partition. Even after that horrific event, India, its leaders, its Constitution and above all the common people chose tolerance, plurality and secularism as the binders of society. The demolition was yet another vulgar attempt to paint Muslims as the "outside enemy". It was the execution of the plan of the legates of M S Golwalkar and K B Hedgewar — to cast India in the mould of a Hindu theocratic state. On December 6, it was not just a historical structure that was mutilated. History itself was mutilated, the wounds of which are still raw in the collective conscience of the oppressed of this country. It was an attempt to obliterate the legacy of Ambedkar, Periyar, Phule and Birsu Munda, who fought for justice and equality.

Since their inception, the RSS and other Hindutva forces have maintained a commit-

## ANOTHER DECEMBER 6

On Ambedkar's death anniversary, his legacy can help counter Hindutva forces

Observing December 6, to remember Ambedkar's vision, is particularly important in these times. The deeply problematic decision of the Supreme Court on the Ayodhya title dispute has emboldened Hindutva forces. Despite the posturing done by the RSS and its ilk to try and recast Ambedkar as one among them, it is absolutely clear that the only interest the right-wing forces have is to polarise the society and draw political-electoral gains. To achieve this, co-option is their preferred methodology.

ment to the hierarchical division of society on the lines of religion and caste, informed by Manu's sense of purity and pollution. It was no accident that the day they chose for the demolition was associated with one of the tallest crusaders against the caste system and hierarchy. December 6 marks the Mahaparinirvan of Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar. Even as the students of Babasaheb, the oppressed of this country are marching to ensure justice and equality, Hindutva forces are pushing the nation onto the path of exclusion and hierarchy. At the symbolic level, the right-wing forces attempted to invisibilise Ambedkar's legacy by remembering December 6 as "Shaurya Diwas" to mark the violence and violation by Kar Sevaks.

The Sangh stands in opposition to the modern, secular ideas upheld by Ambedkar. Having experienced the barbarity of Hinduism, Ambedkar was firm in his resolve that though he might have been born a Hindu he will never die as one. As the ultimate rebellion against brahmanical violence, Ambedkar rejected Hinduism and embraced Buddhism. For him, the function of religion was the moral upliftment of an individual. For the Sangh, it has always been political mobilisation against the "other".

Observing December 6, to remember Ambedkar's vision, is particularly important in these times. The deeply problematic decision

of the Supreme Court in the Ayodhya title dispute has emboldened Hindutva forces. Despite the posturing by the RSS and its ilk to recast Ambedkar as one of them, it is clear that the only interest the right-wing forces have is to polarise the society and draw political-electoral gains. Co-option is their preferred methodology. But the mere garlanding of Babasaheb's statues is not fooling anyone. Each time portions about Ambedkar are deleted from the school textbooks, the true face of the brahmanical forces is exposed.

Ambedkar's increasing relevance in India gives hope to everyone who dreams of a society free of hierarchies, a society based on equality and dignity. His legacy and relevance is also an undying challenge to the reactionary and divisive forces that seek to perpetrate hierarchy and humiliation. It is time we recognise the power structures of caste, patriarchy, religious majoritarianism and thwart their attempts at distorting Ambedkar's legacy.

The demolition of Babri masjid is a dark blot on the social and constitutional history of India. The champions of that act are now at the helm, threatening everything Ambedkar stood for. As citizens of a secular republic, it is imperative that we understand the enormity of December 6 and draw hope for the collective fight to ensure equality and dignity for all.

*The writer is general secretary, CPI*



## DECEMBER 6, 1979, FORTY YEARS AGO

### CONG-LOK DAL SPLIT

THE UNEASY ALLIANCE between the Congress and the Lok Dal virtually came apart following breakdown of negotiations over seat adjustments in Uttar Pradesh. The Congress is now going to the polls on its own manifesto and has set up candidates against the Lok Dal in UP, and, possibly in some other states. Despite this serious development in the strained relations between the two parties, the caretaker coalition government would not be disturbed.

### PREZ RULE IN ASSAM

PRESIDENT'S RULE IN Assam appears imminent in view of the state government's failure

to persuade the agitating youth to call off their satyagraha movement for postponement of forthcoming elections on the one hand, and to provide adequate protection to intending candidates to file their nomination papers for the third day on the other hand. The desirability of bringing Assam under President's rule was considered at a high-level conference between the governor of north-eastern states, L P Singh, and the officer on special duty in the Union Home Ministry, K M L Chabra. Chabra is understood to have informed the governor about the failure of efforts by the state government to persuade the agitating youth in Assam to call off their satyagraha movement.

### PAK N-POLICY

MUNIR AHMED KHAN, chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, said in Delhi that his country would not acquire or produce nuclear weapons. He was speaking at the afternoon session of the 23rd IAEA general conference. He called upon India to enter into an agreement to make South Asia a nuclear-free zone. He said in view of India's repeated assurances to pursue a peaceful nuclear policy, even though it has exploded a nuclear device, such an agreement would be a logical choice for both countries. The Pakistani delegate said his country has expressed the need for such an agreement at the UN general assembly and other forums.



# Our first line of defence

Love and empathy are essential tools to combat radicalisation and extremism



ANANT GOENKA

ADITYA SHARMA TURNED 13 when he lost a parent in the Mumbai attacks. He held a specific community responsible for his father's death, only to realise years later that "hate isn't worth it".

Today he is working towards opening an orphanage for children from that very community. Because of his intellectual journey, he's a hero for us today, so when he says "the world is all about love", let's attempt an interpretation.

What is love? Is it another word for empathy? Is it the opposite of indifference? Is it the absence of fear? Is love the enemy of hate? And, whatever it is, can love be as powerful a motivator as anger?

Events such as 26/11 make us angry because when innocents die, it seems that hate is defeating love.

For four years now, we have been inviting you to the Gateway of India, on every anniversary of the attacks, to evaluate your view on the power of love and the power of hate. And to provoke a dialogue between the humanist and the extremist inside each one of us.

In any attack — whether foreign, like 26/11, or homegrown, like the ones we saw in Colombo and Christchurch this year — the root cause is a twisted mind radicalised with extremist thought. Today, on the 11th anniversary of 26/11 and on the 150th year of Gandhi, let's pause and reflect just how geared our environment is to promote extremism.

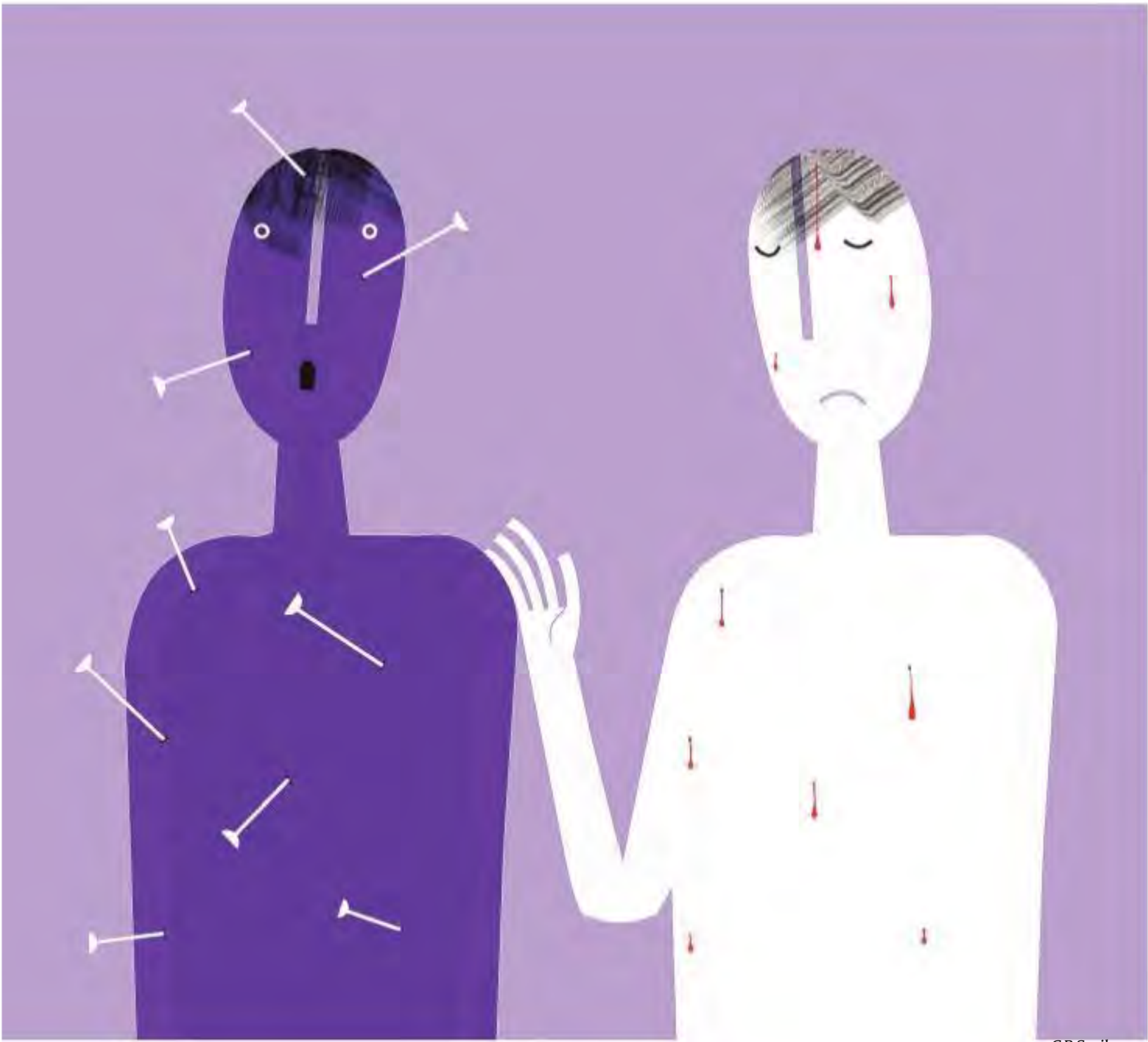
Our media has moved from broadcasting to narrowcasting, where channels are dedicated to audiences based on ideologies rather than demographics. Digital media creates filter bubbles of content and virtual communities of like-minded opinions.

Which is why every time I watch the stories of these 100 survivors that we have interviewed, I am amazed at how these individuals — who have suffered such unimaginable loss — have channelised the hatred and destruction, choosing to build something of value to society.

In our world, increasingly divided between, as Jonathan Sacks says, a right wing that reminisces about a penultimate past that never was and a left wing that dreams of a utopia that never will be, these are individuals who, in spite of their irreversible loss, choose not to hate. Who, when confronted with the choice between revenge and letting go, choose — instead — to look ahead. In the face of despair and destruction, they don't search for someone to blame but take charge, pick up the pieces, and choose to rebuild.

These are powerful markers of humanity in any place, any culture, but I'd like us to reflect: To what degree does being Indian define how these incredible individuals dealt with adversity?

A Harvard case study done on the behaviour of Taj employees (on 26/11) concluded that one reason they behaved so unpredictably selflessly was that Indian Hotels' HR policy was to hire people who are likely to be from joint families and who display respect for elders because they imbibe the Indian value of putting others before themselves. Of the 600 employees of the Taj hotel, not one left his or her post. In fact, many staffers escorted guests to safety and then went back in to help others. They had no reason to do that, many of them even lost their



CR Sasikumar

lives.

It's been famously — and accurately — said that whatever you can rightfully say about India, the opposite is also true. But one thing we do know is that we as a country have always been deeply spiritual and devout. But an increasing cohort of young Indians look at events such as 26/11 and feel disenanchanted by religion, given that terror attacks are often connected with religion.

It'll be a shame if the Indian millennial turns a blind eye to religion because then it leaves the battleground of religion to those who weaponise it — that is, the extremists.

Which is why today, more than ever, we should not view religion with apathy or disdain. Instead, it's up to each one of us to find meaning in ancient texts and philosophy, rather than judge religion based on the most twisted interpretations that some have adopted.

For, each one of us, at some point, has to make that deeply intimate choice. A personal and yet universal one as to which path should we take between the faith of the extremist, the religion of the moderate, and, yes, even the belief of the non-believer.

We would consider our endeavour successful if, upon listening to these stories, you are encouraged to think of what Indianness is, and how integral we would like love to be in our identity.

I am not for a moment suggesting there's no need for a deterrent. Even our gods are depicted with their respective weapons of choice. And especially given our neighbourhood, our armed forces must continuously be growing smarter and stealthier. However, we mustn't let the ability to attack prevent love from being our first line of defence. Because history has shown that one without the other is unlikely to be successful.

I am not for a moment suggesting there's no need for a deterrent. Even our gods are depicted with their respective weapons of choice. And especially given our neighbourhood, our armed forces must continuously be growing smarter and stealthier. However, we mustn't let the ability to attack prevent love from being our first line of defence. Because history has shown that one without the other is unlikely to be successful.

Robert Grenier, the CIA's former station chief in Pakistan, said that the United States's drone programme created more terrorists than it eliminated. Perhaps Maharashtra's ATS understood this, when as *The Indian Express* reported six months ago, it started its counter-radicalisation initiative, a concentrated effort aimed at transforming extremist youth through patient counselling and training. The programme today boasts of 120 youths successfully deradicalised without firing a single bullet.

If, on the other hand, our society turns more extreme — and if we keep finding it harder to be friends with the people we disagree with, then I think we are disrespecting the sacrifice of all those brave men and women who put their lives at stake to keep our country safe.

My most heartfelt gratitude is to those of you who picked up the pieces of your hearts that shattered 11 years ago and let us in. We understand the enormous responsibility we have when we point a camera at you and ask you to share your lives' most vulnerable moments. We ask because it's important — and because only you can put into reality what Martin Luther King Jr. once said: "Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars/Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that./Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

Your stories prove that even though there are a few misguided foolish individuals who think they can decide how we should die, they must know that they cannot decide how we will live.

Goenka is executive director, The Indian Express Group. This is an edited transcript of his speech at the "26/11: Stories of Strength" in Mumbai

## WHAT THE OTHERS SAY

"Enduring the hardships to revive is a lesson that Chinese already learned thousands of years ago. China's prosperity in the future will be the best response to US provocation."

— GLOBAL TIMES, CHINA

## Only shame

As a father, I cannot tell my daughter India is a safe place for women. As a cop, I cannot face those whose daughters have been brutalised



ABHINAV KUMAR

OF ALL the events in my life that give me some sense of satisfaction and achievement, the birth of our daughter, ranks right up there. Against advice, I was present in the delivery room in a Cairo hospital, nervously assisting the doctor, because I wanted to be the first person to hold her. Today, she is an accomplished 18-year-old in college who dreams of making a difference. How I wish I could tell her that the India of today is a lot safer for women than the India she first came to as a four-month-old. Seeing the brutal rape and murder of a veterinary doctor in Hyderabad last week, and similar incidents being reported from different parts of the country, in all honesty I can't. It makes me angry as a citizen, scared as a parent, and deeply ashamed as a police officer.

It has been seven years since the December 2012 Delhi rape case shocked the conscience of our nation. But barring some changes in the law, it seems that little has changed on the ground. Five years after the Delhi HC confirmed the death sentence against the accused, the appeals process is yet to be exhausted. Meanwhile, women continue to live with the fear of facing the full spectrum of misogyny, from leering looks to brutal violence, both at home and in public spaces.

What is doubly outrageous is the misplaced idealism, and simply stupid and perverse logic, that are offered to us for the persistence of such violent crimes. On one end of the political spectrum, structural misogyny and gender bias, embedded in our cultural norms and social practices, are frequently offered as an omnibus explanation for these brutal acts. While it contains important insights, this diagnosis is unhelpful in offering urgent practical solutions. Rape is a universal phenomenon. The fight for gender equality is a worthy goal in itself. But to think that violent rapes would go away if only all men could be equally conditioned to view women with respect and equality, is a lofty ideal. We need to be prepared for the possibility that despite the adoption of most progressive social norms and beliefs, some men at some times will continue to behave as beasts. Enlightened social values will not suffice in dealing with them. An effective criminal justice system is required.

On the other end of the spectrum, we see all kinds of bizarre explanations that blame these heinous crimes on what women wear, where they work, how they entertain themselves, and when and where they travel. Others blame their incidence on what men eat and drink, and what they watch on film and TV, and what they access on the internet. It points to our collective sense of numbness and shock, that we barely react when such absurdities are spouted as explanations.

We need to start asking hard questions and go beyond outrage, the clamour for

harsher laws, and for outrageous solutions such as lynchings and public executions. Tough laws are merely the first step. We need to create well resourced and accountable systems that enforce these laws. Severity of punishment is only one aspect of an effective criminal justice system. Certainty of punishment is equally important — probably more so. If the investigating agencies and the trial courts can be made accountable for time-bound investigation and fast-track trials, the higher judiciary must also introspect about ensuring a time-bound disposal of appeals in such cases. Similar considerations must apply to the disposal of all mercy petitions.

There are critical gaps in our institutional capacity to fight crimes against women. First, we need to recruit more women at all ranks in our police. And also as prosecutors and judges. In many cases, including the Hyderabad doctor's case, we have heard complaints about the poor quality of police response. This is both a resource issue and a culture issue. We will always be assessing the urgency and genuineness of a call and prioritising our resources accordingly. The quality of our response then becomes a culture issue. Even today, a class 10th certificate remains the minimum qualification for recruitment as a constable in many police forces. The constabulary constitutes 95 per cent of our police force. To expect someone with such rudimentary education and basic training to act as a first responder in cases of rape and violence against women, with an innate sense of sensitivity and professionalism, is wishful thinking. We need to change our recruitment and training standards to better incorporate their role in dealing with crimes against women.

On a contrarian note, despite popular perception of a country hit by a epidemic of brutal rapes, the data suggests that our incidence of rape per 1,00,000 population is quite low compared to other societies. Even if we double or triple the figures on account of under reporting, we have no reason to believe that rape in India is more pervasive than other countries. However gruesome, incidents do shock our collective conscience — as they must. But venting of outrage on social media and public protests will not solve the problem.

On many occasions, independent India has demonstrated its capability to tackle national challenges with resolve and purpose. How about a National Nari Suraksha Mission where the GoI tackles the problem in mission mode in close partnership with the state governments? It would give states grants and other incentives for improving their institutional capacity for tackling crimes against women.

If I ever ran into the parents of the December 12 victim or the Hyderabad vet, I don't think I would be able to face them without a sense of shame and failure. We simply couldn't do enough to prevent their daughters from becoming victims. At best, we can hope that their perpetrators will finally face justice. But I do want to be able to look my daughter in the eye and tell her that we will do everything it takes, to ensure a safer India for all our daughters.

The writer is a serving IPS officer. Views are personal

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### WHOSE HOMELAND?

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Government brings law making religion key to citizenship for illegals' (IE, December 5). The intention behind the Citizenship Bill to help the persecuted minorities is justified but is it right to slot persecuted people on the basis of religion? By making religion a marker of identity, we are going against constitutional values.

Divya Singla, Patiala

### PAWAR, THE LEADER

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Great Pawar, greater responsibilities' (IE, December 5). Sharad Pawar has emerged as the strongest Opposition leader in the country today. He was instrumental in stitching the unlikely Shiv Sena Sena-NCP-Congress alliance to keep the BJP away from power. Pawar has been a defence minister, opposition leader in the Lok Sabha and a three-time Maharashtra chief minister in a political career spanning more than 50 years. Pawar is the best choice to forge unity amongst Opposition parties.

Vandana, Chandigarh

### GOALPOST SHIFTS

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Sena on test' (IE, December 5). It is unbecoming of the newly-appointed CM of Maharashtra to think shelving developmental projects started by his predecessor, rather than hitting the ground running. This is the fundamental rea-

### 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](mailto:editpage@expressindia.com) or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301.

son why domestic and foreign investors shy away from investment in India. The Shiva Sena ought not to change goal posts.

Deepak Singhal, Chennai

### TIME TO ACT

THIS REFERS TO the editorial, 'Slowdown pain' (IE, December 5). The central government should avoid the prospect of being embarrassed by some states going to the Supreme court over GST compensation issue. Better sense will prevail among all stake holders only if Centre releases funds from the pool that lies unutilised. States and the Centre should waste no time in taking long-time measures to push GST revenues.

Deepak Sharma, Panchkula



RAJENDRA PAL GAUTAM

## A time to remember

B R Ambedkar was instrumental in shaping legal rights of women in India

"I measure the progress of a community by the degree of progress which women have achieved" — Babasaheb Ambedkar.

WHAT A powerful statement to make. To have such a worldview in the early 20th century, when the country was going through grave political turmoil, speaks volumes about the vision of Ambedkar. He envisioned an India where rights were universal, and inclusive, of women.

But how often do we remember Ambedkar when it comes to issues pertaining to women's empowerment? What remains lesser known about him was how he single-handedly ensured that a progressive vision for the emancipation of women made its way into the Constitution. To this end, he framed numerous pieces of legislations to protect and safeguard the interests of women.

As a student in London and New York, young Ambedkar was highly influenced by the civil liberties and women's emancipation movements in the West. As the first law minister of independent India and chairman of the Constitution drafting committee, Ambedkar held critical positions which influenced the legislative framework of the country. Even before Independence, Ambedkar was an active elected member of the imperial government on the issue of

women's rights.

The Hindu Code Bill, introduced by Ambedkar as law minister of independent India, reveals his views on gender equality, and his strong stance against a caste-based society.

As early as the British Raj, laws to govern Hindu communities had appeared to help closed communities regulate themselves, and, till as late as the Rau Committee in 1948, there was still no consensus on several key issues of a Universal Hindu Code.

Despite the presence of women in the Constituent Assembly, questions of gender did not crop up in the Hindu Code Bill until they went to Ambedkar for his comments.

After over two decades of meaningless debates, the Hindu Code for the first time included the right of women to divorce, the right of inheritance to daughters, and the right of widows to equal property rights. Simultaneously, the regressive language around caste-specific rules was also deleted.

This Bill, later, turned into a series of Acts, including the Hindu Marriage Act of 1955, and forms the legislative bedrock of women's claims to shared property even today.

As part of the Constituent Assembly debates, Ambedkar also ensured that universal adult franchise was an integral part of the republic, enabling voting rights (which was earlier reserved only for the privileged) for

women and other minority groups.

Ambedkar wanted women to have higher participation in all walks of life, especially, in the political arena. Even as a legislator under the colonial regime, Ambedkar was one of the first activists to root for the rights of working women.

He argued that "it is in the interest of the nation that the mother ought to get a certain amount of rest during the pre-natal period" and it was the responsibility of the government to bear some of the burden of her maternity as the people's interest is the primary responsibility of the government. As a direct result, basic rights for mine and factory workers, as well as protections for women, children and working mothers were passed as early as 1938.

Thus, at each step, Ambedkar challenged the deep-rooted patriarchal foundations of Indian society and helped in drafting a Constitution which has stood the test of time.

I would like to emphasise that in keeping with the spirit of Ambedkar's vision, the Delhi government recently launched the free bus rides for women initiative to enhance their participation in the city's workforce. Preliminary data suggests that there has been an increase in daily ridership of women from 32 per cent to 42 per cent within a month.

The Delhi government, over the past five years, has rolled out many steps to ensure

the safety of women in the city such as the installation of CCTV cameras, deployment of bus marshals, running an exclusive helpline number for women through the Delhi Commission for Women, etc. The government's initiative to install 1.4 lakh CCTVs in the city, is one of the largest mass deployment of CCTVs by any government in the world.

To further the safety of women in the city, the government is also in the advanced stages of installing street lights under the Mukhyamantri Street Light Scheme: This will help to light up all the dark spots of the city, on the basis of recommendations of the citizens themselves. However, the lack of control over police services, which comes directly under the Union home ministry, holds back the Delhi government in keeping check of the rising incidents of crimes against women.

In these testing times, when the entire nation is gripped with incidents of women being raped, assaulted and murdered, I would like to remind everyone that the Constitution of India drafted by B R Ambedkar will bring the offenders to court and justice will be served.

The writer, a senior leader of the Aam Aadmi Party, is minister of social welfare and SC/ST in the Delhi government





## TELLING NUMBERS

### 3,800 denied boarding in June, 48k affected by cancellations in July

BETWEEN MAY and October this year, over 1,000 passengers were denied boarding by various airlines each month, peaking at 3,834 passengers in June. During the same period, flight cancellations affected between 15,000 and 48,000 passengers each month, while flight delays of two hours or more affected between 1.2 lakh and 2.5 lakh fliers each month. These data were presented by the Ministry of Civil Aviation in response to two separate questions in Parliament.

According to the Civil Aviation Requirements detailed by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation, when a passenger denied boarding against their will is not given the option of an alternative flight within one hour, the airline is liable to pay between Rs 10,000 and Rs 20,000 to the passenger depending on the circumstance. In September and October, when over 2,100 passengers were denied boarding across flights, Air India accounted for 1,400 of them. The maximum number of passengers affected by flight cancellations during

#### DENIED BOARDING, AIRLINE BY AIRLINE

AIRLINE	SEPTEMBER 2019		OCTOBER 2019	
	Passengers	Facilities & compensation (₹ lakh)	Passengers	Facilities & compensation (₹ lakh)
Air India	582	26.14	822	37.51
Spicejet	347	10.06	226	6.50
IndiGo	17	1.40	35	2.68
Air Asia	12	0.43	14	0.33
Vistara	2	0.03	5	0.30
Trujet	17	1.05	—	—
Air Heritage	33	0.18	—	—
TOTAL	1,010	39.29	1,102	47.32

Source: Ministry of Civil Aviation

#### FLIERS AFFECTED BY CANCELLATIONS

AIRLINE	PASSENGERS	
	SEPT '19	OCT '19
Air India	3,050	6,485
Pawan Hans	9	9
Spicejet	4,723	6,885
Go Air	345	106
IndiGo	11,366	9,526
Air Asia	345	1,176
Vistara	488	465
Star Air	187	57
Trujet	2826	980
Air Deccan	2	10
Air Heritage	—	77
TOTAL	23,341	25,776

these six months was 48,272 in July, which also accounted for the highest number of passengers affected by delays of two hours or more, at 2.5 lakh. In September and October, a combined 49,000 were affected by cancellations; over 20,000 of them were IndiGo passengers.

## THIS WORD MEANS

### BLUE WATER FORCE

The world's most powerful navies — those that can operate in deep, faraway oceans

ON DECEMBER 4, Navy Day, the office of Defence Minister Rajnath Singh posted on Twitter: "Indian Navy is the Formidable Blue Water Force. Navy Day Greetings to all Men and Women in White." In a video presentation about its capabilities, the Navy too, called itself a "formidable blue water force".

**BLUE WATER NAVY:** A Blue Water Navy is one that has the capacity to project itself over a much bigger maritime area than its maritime borders. Simply put, it is a Navy that can go into the vast, deep oceans of the world. However, while most navies have the capacity to send ships into the deep oceans, a Blue Water Force is able to carry out operations far from its borders, without being required to return to its home port to refuel or re-stock.

While it is evident that Blue Water navies belong to the most powerful nations, there is no one internationally agreed upon definition. Owning one or more aircraft carriers is sometimes seen as a marker.

**ACCORDING TO** the Indian Maritime

Doctrine, 2015, "The ability to undertake distant operations distinguishes a blue-water navy from a brown-water force. It requires strong integral capacity, including logistics, surveillance, networked operations, etc., and enabling capability, including equipment design, training, doctrine and organisation." It states "distant operations rely upon the attributes of access, mobility, sustenance and reach in order to show presence, project power and/or accomplish other national objectives in the area of interest".

As the Indian Navy has the capacity to carry distant operations "at or from the sea, up to considerable distance from national shore bases", it qualifies as a Blue Water Force.

**NAVIES ARE CLASSIFIED** in terms of colours. A navy whose operations are restricted close to the shore, where the water is muddy, is called a Brown Water Force. A navy that can go farther out is called a Green Water Force. And then there is a Blue Water Force.

**KRISHN KAUSHIK**



Navy Day on Wednesday. PTI

## Data protection: issues, debate

Cleared by the Cabinet, the Personal Data Protection Bill is due to be placed in Parliament. How does it propose to protect personal data, how is it different from previous draft, and why is it a subject of debate?

#### KARISHMA MEHROTRA

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 5

GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS today revolve around debates about the transfer of data. India's first attempt to domestically legislate on the topic, the Personal Data Protection (PDP) Bill, 2019, has been approved by the Cabinet and is slated to be placed in Parliament this winter session. The Bill has three key aspects that were not previously included in a draft version, prepared by a committee headed by retired Justice B N Srikrishna.

#### Why does data matter?

Data is any collection of information that is stored in a way so computers can easily read them (think 011010101010 format). Data usually refers to information about your messages, social media posts, online transactions, and browser searches.

The individual whose data is being stored and processed is called the data principal in the PDP Bill. This large collection of information about you and your online habits has become an important source of profits, but also a potential avenue for invasion of privacy because it can reveal extremely personal aspects. Companies, governments, and political parties find it valuable because they can use it to find the most convincing ways to advertise to you online. It is now clear that much of the future's economy and law enforcement will be predicated on the regulation of data, introducing issues of national sovereignty.

#### Who handles my data, and how?

Data is stored in a physical space similar to a file cabinet of documents, and transported across country borders in underwater cables that run as deep as Mount Everest and as long as four times the Indian Ocean. To be considered useful, data has to be processed, which means analysed by computers.

Data is collected and handled by entities called data fiduciaries. While the fiduciary controls how and why data is processed, the processing itself may be by a third party, the data processor. This distinction is important to delineate responsibility as data moves from entity to entity. For example, in the US, Facebook (the data controller) fell into controversy for the actions of the data processor — Cambridge Analytica.

The physical attributes of data — where data is stored, where it is sent, where it is turned into something useful — are called data flows. Data localisation arguments are premised on the idea that data flows determine who has access to the data, who profits off it, who taxes and who "owns" it. However, many contend that the physical location of the data is not relevant in the cyber world.

#### How does the PDP Bill propose to regulate data transfer?

To legislate on the topic, the Bill trifurcates



Illustration: Suvajit Dey

personal data. The umbrella group is all personal data — data from which an individual can be identified. Some types of personal data are considered sensitive personal data (SPD), which the Bill defines as financial, health, sexual orientation, biometric, genetic, transgender status, caste, religious belief, and more. Another subset is critical personal data. The government at any time can deem something critical, and has given examples as military or national security data.

In the Bill approved by the Cabinet, there are three significant changes from the version drafted by a committee headed by the Justice B N Srikrishna Committee.

**1** The draft had said all fiduciaries must store a copy of all personal data in India — a provision that was criticised by foreign technology companies that store most of Indians' data abroad and even some domestic startups that were worried about a foreign backlash. The approved Bill removes this stipulation, only requiring individual consent for data transfer abroad. Similar to the draft, however, the Bill still requires sensitive personal data to be stored only in India. It can be processed abroad only under certain conditions including approval of a Data Protection Agency (DPA). The final category of critical personal data must be stored and processed in India.

**2** The Bill mandates fiduciaries to give the government any non-personal data when demanded. Non-personal data refers to anonymised data, such as traffic patterns or demographic data. The previous draft did not apply to this type of data, which many companies use to fund their business model.

**3** The Bill also requires social media companies, which are deemed significant data

fiduciaries based on factors such as volume and sensitivity of data as well as their turnover, to develop their own user verification mechanism. While the process can be voluntary for users and can be completely designed by the company, it will decrease the anonymity of users and "prevent trolling", said official sources.

#### What are its other key features?

The Bill includes exemptions for processing data without an individual's consent for "reasonable purposes", including security of the state, detection of any unlawful activity or fraud, whistleblowing, medical emergencies, credit scoring, operation of search engines and processing of publicly available data, official sources said.

The Bill calls for the creation of an independent regulator DPA, which will oversee assessments and audits and definition making. Each company will have a Data Protection Officer (DPO) who will liaison with the DPA for auditing, grievance redressal, recording maintenance and more. The committee's draft had required the DPO to be based in India.

The committee's draft had several other significant keywords that are expected to be in the Bill. "Purpose limitation" and "collection limitation" limit the collection of data to what is needed for "clear, specific, and lawful" purposes or for reasons that the data principal would "reasonably expect". It also grants individuals the right to data portability, and the ability to access and transfer one's own data. Finally, it legislates on the right to be forgotten. With historical roots in European Union law, this right allows an individual to remove consent for data collection and disclosure. After the Cabinet approval of the bill, an official source said this

## Sealed cover: what Chidambaram bail Bench rejected

the judges.

#### When can the court ask for information in a sealed envelope?

The court asks for information in sealed covers in two circumstances: when information is connected to an ongoing investigation, and when it involves personal or confidential information. Disclosure of information linked to an ongoing investigation could impede the investigation, and the disclosure of personal or confidential information could violate an individual's privacy or result in breach of trust.

#### What is the problem with the court relying on information in sealed covers?

It prevents parties from having a full overview of the charges against them, and it is not compatible with the idea of an open court and a transparent justice system. Courts are bound to set out reasons for their

decisions, and legal experts argue that not disclosing them leaves scope for arbitrariness in judicial decisions. It also takes away the opportunity to analyse judicial decisions, and to appreciate the rationale behind them.

#### In which cases has the court relied on sealed covers?

The practice of seeking information in sealed covers is not limited to the higher judiciary. The Supreme Court had relied on sealed covers in the 2G case, in which it cancelled telecom licences. In Chidambaram's case, while trying to persuade the court to refer to information in the sealed cover, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta referred to a 1997 case of anticipatory bail involving P V Prabhakar Rao, son of former Prime Minister P V Narasimha Rao.

Over the past year, the Supreme Court has relied on information in sealed covers in several significant cases. In the cases related to

the National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam, the court asked the then state coordinator Prateek Hajela to submit periodic reports in sealed covers, which were not disclosed even to the government. Sealed covers also had roles in the BCRI reforms case, the Rafale case, and the case seeking the quashing of FIRs in the Bhima Koregaon case.

#### What did the court say in Chidambaram's case?

While maintaining that the court can seek information in sealed covers and pursue them "to satisfy its conscience that the investigation is proceeding in the right lines and for the purpose of consideration of grant of bail/anticipatory bail etc.," it cannot rely on such information to make its decision, the court said.

It noted that in deciding on bail, it had "consciously refrained from opening the sealed cover and perusing the documents".

## Citizenship lost and regained: the importance of being Milan Kundera

#### SEEMACHISHTI

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 5

CARRYING A copy of Milan Kundera's classic *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* was an affectation of many young students the world over in the 1980s. Published in 1984, the book attained near-cult status and also became an acclaimed film four years later.

Last week, the 90-year-old author was in the news again. The Czech Republic's ambassador to France, Petr Dulak, went to Kundera's flat in Paris to give him a citizenship certificate. Dulak later told Czech Radio of Kundera's "profound" Czechness. "He stayed by his convictions and identity, a profound Czech, I would say. He is really someone who is very linked to this country and he is very interested in what is going on in

Czech Republic."

#### What had happened

In 1979, Kundera was stripped of his citizenship of undivided Czechoslovakia. He had published a book in France called *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, whose best known line is: "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting". The book is said to have alluded to the then Czechoslovak President Gustav Husak as "the president of forgetting". The government did not forget. His citizenship snatched away, Kundera, who along with his wife was in Rennes on a teaching assignment since 1975, made Paris his home. He became a French citizen in 1981.

Kundera is identified as a socialist and was a member of the Communist party too, and was expelled twice. He first joined the party

in 1948, was expelled after two years for "hostile thinking and individualistic tendencies", and rejoined the party in 1956. It was after Prague Spring, or the Soviet suppression of the reform attempted in Czechoslovakia, that things got bad for him. He was expelled from the Academy of Writers and, in 1970, from the party again. His books and plays became invisible in his home country.

#### His idea of 'home'

In an interview to *The New York Times* in 1984, Kundera said, "You have to ask: What is home? What does it mean to be 'at home'? It's a complicated question. I can



Kundera, 1967. CTK via AP

honestly say that I feel much better here in Paris than I did in Prague, but then can I also say that I lost my home, leaving Prague? All I know is that before I left I was terrified of 'losing home' and that after I left I realised — it was with a certain astonishment — that I did not feel loss, I did not feel deprived."

When Czech President Andrej Babiš visited Paris last year, he held a three-hour meeting with Kundera and his wife Vera, then posted on Facebook: "The conversation was driven by Mrs Kundera, an incredibly energetic lady... I think they deserve the Czech citizenship they lost after emigrating."

Kundera has not spoken after his citizenship was restored. It is unclear if he had ever asked for it. He is reported to have just been concerned if there would be "too much paperwork".

In 1984, in an interview to *Die Zeit*, he had said: "There is no such dream of a return... I took my Prague; the smell, the taste, the language, the landscape, the culture."

#### What it means to the Czech

Many of Kundera's later books were published in France, in French, and did not always reach Czechoslovakia/Czech Republic after 1981. He won the Czech national literature prize in 2008, but did not travel to the ceremony. He is known to have travelled back after the Velvet Revolution, but "incognito".

The Czechs have had an intimate relationship with writers; theirs is one of the few

countries to have had a playwright/writer as President in Vaclav Havel, for many years. Kundera and Havel held public debates on the meaning of protest and its utility. It started with Kundera publishing *The Czech Lot*, in the magazine *Listy* in December 1968; he wrote about the perils of being a small state. Havel responded in 1969, with *The Czech Lot?* in the journal *Tvar*.

In 1984, Kundera spoke of regimes being threatened by critics. "Before, we had been thrown in prison, but now the Government was saying, in effect, that we were less dangerous to it in exile — writing and making speeches and even organising against it — than we were silenced in our own country. It was an acknowledgement that even in prison we added to the undercurrent of disquiet in Czechoslovakia, that the country would always know we were there."



OUR VIEW



# New Delhi must do the heavy lifting we need

*We should not look to RBI for relief from the economic slowdown. But if its monetary tools are blunt, the government’s fiscal instruments may prove no better without major reforms*

On Thursday, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) paused its policy rate-easing cycle after an uninterrupted series of cuts all through this year as the economy lost pace. The central bank had already reduced its repurchase rate, the one at which it lends money to commercial banks, to an inflation-adjusted half a percentage point. This is about as cheap as cheap money gets. But, alas, it has not achieved much. In any case, the cuts have not fully filtered through to banks, which, constrained by high deposit costs, have lowered their own lending rates by only a fraction of RBI’s rate reductions. Now, if food inflation refuses to fall or feeds into general inflationary expectations, further rate cuts could take its real interest rate into negative territory. And, if it still fails its economic revival job, it would expose the limits of such monetary easing as a tool. In a worst-case scenario, it could even raise the spectre of a liquidity trap—where lenders lose their incentive to lend. In all, RBI seems to be signalling that it is almost out of ammunition, and that it’s time for the government to act. As if to convey this loud and clear, the central bank has also slashed its growth estimate for 2019-20 drastically. It is 5% now, down from 6.1% declared just a couple of months ago.

Now that the task of hauling the economy out of its slump is squarely the government’s, central finances will come back into focus. Could a burst of extra spending do it? That would depend on what it spends on and the sort of demand it generates. But here, too, risks abound. With heavy expenditure committed already, the Centre’s fiscal space is limited. Unless revenues stage a sharp recovery and

sell-offs raise more than planned, this year’s deficit could slip well past the budget target. Since central borrowing has barrelled on, buyers of treasury bonds are offering their money at rather high rates of interest. A fiscal binge at this juncture might push bond market yields further up, negating some of RBI’s efforts to keep a lid on the cost of capital, and could also prove inflationary. It has been suggested that RBI supports a big fiscal leap; that it should slurp up bonds in its own version of “quantitative easing”. Such a rash experiment, however, could go badly wrong if the money spewed out does not reach the real economy and inflates asset bubbles instead.

Perhaps the answer simply lies in getting wallets to open and households to spend more. Disposable incomes could be raised via tax cuts, and bigger welfare transfers to the hard-up could get cash changing hands. Voices from within the government have hinted at this twin-pronged approach, with an accelerated disinvestment programme taking some pressure off the fisc. But this faces its own set of challenges. Transfers would need to be aimed well, for example, while the Centre’s infrastructure projects would need a buy-in from states, which are mostly cash strapped. Even then, this strategy would only address cyclical aspects of our slowdown, while there is reason to suspect that structural constraints need easing as well. This would mean taking a close look at every sector of the economy for signs of anything that prevents market forces—of demand and supply—and their price mechanisms from playing an efficient role in the allocation of our resources. Of course, this would imply an all-out shift to a market economy. It may shake things up, but also achieve results.

MY VIEW | LEARNING 4.0

# Environmental challenges call for a holistic approach

KAPIL VISWANATHAN



is vice-chairman of Krea University

Unintended consequences of human progress over the past decades have begun to adversely impact the environment we live in, which provides the basic conditions for life on earth to exist. For example, the layer of ozone in the upper atmosphere, which protects us from harmful radiation, is being depleted due to our excessive use of aerosol chemicals. Predictions made back in the 1980s about climate change are starting to come true. Extreme weather events around the world appear to be more common than before. Cities like Chennai and Mumbai get flooded during the monsoon, and yet run out of water later in the year.

One of the most critical crises that we face today is access to potable water. There are three kinds of access problems. The first one is where there are no systems in place for the regular supply of water; for example, in urban slums. The second is where there is a regular system in place, but a section of society faces challenges due to the seasonal

unavailability of water. This situation is becoming common in cities like Chennai, Bengaluru, Mumbai, and is giving rise to widespread distress. The third kind of situation has often been observed in rural areas where people depend on natural sources of drinking water that are fast becoming inaccessible because of pollution and environmental changes.

More than a billion people worldwide lack access to water, and a total of 2.7 billion people find water scarce for at least one month of the year. This is largely due to pollution, climate change, population growth and changes in consumption patterns. At the current rate of consumption, two-thirds of the world’s population may face water shortages by 2025. This also leads to other issues like the spread of water-borne diseases. Children and women often face the burden of fetching water, resulting in increased school drop-out rates, particularly for girls.

How did we come to this point, and what can we do about it?

An understanding of our current environmental challenges can only come from studying them in the context of both technology and society. Technology is one of the key attributes of today’s human society,

one that makes our era entirely different from thousands of years of human presence on earth. On one hand, our tech-centred orientation is one of the primary causes of our alienation from nature; on the other, technology can help us cope with the environmental stresses being faced by human society. From a different point of view, technology is one of the major factors inducing environmental pollution. To accommodate technological progress, humans have always sacrificed the environment, which eventually led to complex change and wide-scale biodiversity loss.

In the context of the global environmental crisis, it is paramount to revisit our relationship with technology. This could be in three ways: first, how technology can help society manage environmental issues. Second, how society can act to manage the externalities of technology within environmentally acceptable standards.

And third, how technology can aid in evaluating the current environmental condition and its impact on society.

When we look at environmental issues in the context of society, we recognize that environmental migration is one of the key issues that future generations will need to cope with. The United Nations forecasts that there could be up to 1 billion environmental migrants by 2050, mostly from coastal areas. We must think through current land-use changes, diversification of livelihoods at a community level, building resilience, and policies for environmental migrants. An added layer of complexity, given our political boundaries, is how humanity should respond to environmental migrants.

Moving from a societal to a philosophical view, we must redefine the needs of an individual, and understand the reasons behind increasingly consumeristic lifestyles across the globe. Humans do not harm the environ-

ment intentionally. Environmental disturbance is a by-product or negative externality of human actions that arise due to our needs and aspirations—in other words, the unintended consequences of human progress. Exploring the nature of our progress and the consumption landscape could be one way to address the latter. The cycle of production and consumption does not happen in a void. It is a way to respond to individual needs and desires. We must therefore also be aware of how the aspirations of one section of society could leave the needs of other sections unfulfilled. We must ponder how the very notion of “need” is in transition in the 21st century, and what impact it has on earth’s finite resources. When questions of the distribution of environmental resources converge to become the departure point, issues like injustice, marginalization, and resource extraction come to the fore.

It is evident that our challenges related to the environment are interwoven with challenges from societal, technological and philosophical perspectives. We must confront these challenges holistically, and evolve sustainable pathways through individual, societal and state actions.

*Members of the faculty at Krea University contributed to this article*

MY VIEW | FARM TRUTHS

# Survey data and government claims need not always match

*Let’s not discredit the findings of statistical surveys that are conducted among real respondents*



HIMANSHU is associate professor at Jawaharlal Nehru University and visiting fellow at the Centre de Sciences Humaines, New Delhi

The uncomfortable truth that emerged from the leaked report of the Consumer Expenditure Survey (CES) is that rural poverty increased substantially between 2011-12 and 2017-18 for the first time in five decades. That this happened during a period of claimed high growth should have led to more research on what went wrong. Instead, there have been attempts to raise questions on the credibility of the data and discredit the National Statistical Office (NSO).

The attempt to discredit the NSO follows a pattern, starting from the leak of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) reports. Fearing more leaks, the NSO has released reports on drinking water, sanitation, education, health and disability. These surveys, which are routine, debunk many claims of the government. Most notable is the finding that only 71.3% households have access to toilets, as against the Centre’s claim of more than 95%. Many of these surveys have reported facts that are inconvenient to the government of the day.

This has been the case earlier as well. However, there has never been an attack on the NSO, as has been the case since the leaked PLFS report. So much so that the chief statistician of India (CSI), along with another secretary of the government of India, has argued that responses to survey questions suggest a diminishing sense of nationalism.

In one stroke, a hundred thousand respondents have had their nationalism questioned simply because the survey responses do not match administrative data. The assumption seems to be that there can never be anything wrong with administrative data and contradictory findings are dubious.

Why should surveys match administrative data? If survey reports are to reproduce administrative data, there is no need of independent surveys. The very purpose of these exercises is to validate the administration’s information. As sample data is collected and processed anonymously, surveys have a credibility that administrative data cannot always claim. Given that government officials, including secretaries, are rewarded or punished on the basis of administrative data, there is an inbuilt incentive to manipulate it. Take the case of the difference between survey data and administrative data on the public distribution system (PDS), on which arguments were made that its delivery mechanism suffers from corruption and leakages. This debate led to serious research on the functioning of the PDS, leading to the enactment of the National Food Security Act. In all such cases, data gaps have encouraged more research and the improvement of government programmes.

In most countries, differences between administrative data and independent surveys are seen as a sign of inefficiency, corruption or leakage without the risk of being labelled less nationalist.

Surveys also produce estimates that an administration cannot obtain on its own. Our consumer surveys are unique, as they are the only source of direct estimates of household consumption based on data collected from actual consumers. Any divergence between sales or production numbers available to the administration and what surveys say is not always because the latter are faulty. Consider airline passenger tickets, car sales or mobile users. These include purchases by households, governments, corporations and other such entities. While these are items of individual use, they do not strictly constitute household consumption if they’re provided by the employer. The CES only captures what households buy.

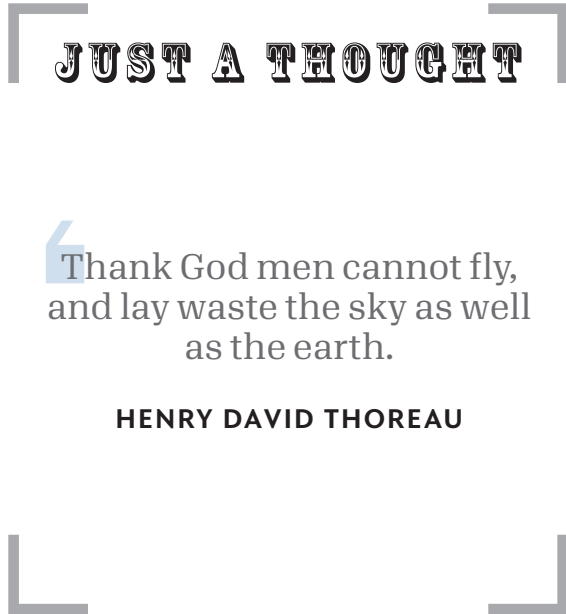
It is nobody’s case that there are no problems with surveys. These issues are known and the NSO has been experimenting with different recall periods and sampling strategies to get its estimates as accurate as possible. There have also been problems with sampling. CES surveys tend to underestimate the consumption of the rich. However, differences with administrative data have never been a reason to alter the survey’s methodology or reject results.

Why discredit the government’s own statistical system? It has a global reputation for the quality of its surveys. Is it because most of these are speaking truth to power? The credibility of NSO surveys lies in the independence and integrity of the NSO, which, it seems, insists on reporting what was found even if the entire survey gets shelved in the process. Governments have a vested interest in questioning the credibility of inconvenient data. But it is unfortunate if those entrusted with upholding and defending the integrity of the institution also start discrediting it.

QUICK READ

Attempts to discredit the NSO seem to ride on assumption that its survey findings must tally with administrative data, despite the vested interest that governments have in casting doubt on inconvenient truths.

Such surveys are meant to shed light on ground realities and it is precisely for the quality of its studies that the NSO commands an enviable global reputation.





THEIR VIEW

# Improve contract enforcement to help the economy recover

RBI has done well to pause its monetary easing, but a revival led by fiscal efforts will likely stall if payment problems persist



INDIRA RAJARAMAN  
is an economist

The fifth bi-monthly monetary policy statement on 5 December was most reassuring. The Monetary Policy Committee wisely took a pause after five consecutive repo rate cuts aggregating to 1.35 percentage points. The reasons given wholly justified the pause. The transmission of monetary easing to bank lending rates on fresh rupee loans has traversed only one-third of the policy rate distance so far; rigid rates on small savings instruments remain an impediment to bank deposit rate cuts, and, as the policy statement delicately puts it, the Monetary Policy Framework awaits better insight on the fiscal stance of the government.

The finance minister has repeatedly said that the fiscal deficit will be held at the announced budgeted level of 3.3% of gross domestic product (GDP). Adherence to the Centre's budgeted fiscal deficit will not be a virtue at this time. What it will do, at a time of expenditure pressures and when revenue is slowing because growth is slowing, is that there will be expenditure deferment. Construction projects tend to be large and, therefore, confer a significant deferment benefit. I have written before on how deferment of payments due to Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services (IL&FS) for road building precipitated its default on bank loans in September 2018, which led to the non-banking financial companies contagion we continue to suffer.

A recent statement by the finance minister promises a major infrastructure expenditure thrust to be announced in mid-December. Construction companies will come forward only if they are sure they will receive their payments on time. This can happen only if there is continual verification of the work as it progresses. The final issue of a completion certificate must be time-barred and precede invoice submission.

This is particularly important after the goods and services tax (GST), which is payable by the contractor on an accrual basis at the time the invoice is submitted. Earlier, service tax was not leviable on construction contracts with the government, but now GST is. So, as GST is transmitted in advance by the contractor to the government before he actually receives it in cash from the buyer (the government), it stands to reason that all procedures, such as verification, must be done before this, and the time interval to final payment must carry a stipulated cap (no longer than six months). Had these been in place, the IL&FS situation might have been prevented. In procurement contracts, once again, time-barred verification for all departments can be done by a technical team of the Indian Statistical Service trained in statistical quality control.

In a countercyclical fiscal expansion, Keynes famously suggested that the type of expenditure did not matter, but in our case it does. The incremental



PRADEEP GAUR/MINT

rupee of fiscal expenditure varies in its multiplier impact according to the propensity to spend of recipients—and, in particular, to spend on domestically produced goods and services. Expenditure on construction of roads and other infrastructure (either primary or maintenance) puts money in the hands of labourers, who will spend for survival in their immediate vicinity and remit some home. Some of it will be spent there too. The multiplier impact on domestic demand will be higher than if equivalent incremental income went to population segments with higher propensities to import.

Where expenditure is transferred to other agents for execution, such as state governments or institutions of various kinds, deferments are done on alleged failures to adhere to conditionalities. The Nirbhaya Fund budgetary allocation has been underutilized for these reasons, with the gruesome consequences we see every day. Such schemes typically carry a complex set of qualifying conditions with the ostensible aim of preventing misuse, but these very conditions can be used as an instrument of destruction.

Another deferment alternative when elections change the party in power (at state level, so far) is outright termination of contracts signed by prior governments. Independent power producers are among those adversely affected by this practice in recent years. Of course, if the new government institutes new expenditure avenues in the space

opened up, there will be no reduction in the fiscal deficit, other things being equal.

The good news is that there is evidence of simplification of complex conditionalities surrounding recent schemes, such as the fiscal package for completion of stalled housing projects, first announced on 14 September 2019. As initially announced, a qualifying project had to have positive net worth, not be in default or referred to bankruptcy, and with achieved completion of more than 60%.

The delay in operationalizing the scheme in itself flipped many potentially qualifying projects into bankruptcy. The final cabinet approval on 6 November simplified qualifications to just positive net worth and registration under the Real Estate Regulation Act.

Thursday's monetary policy announcement refers to impediments to investment. In the latest edition of the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business, India's rise to rank 63 was rightly celebrated. What escaped attention was that of its 10 constituent indicators, India had a rank of 163 out of 190 countries in contract enforcement, and the government itself has been an erring party. This is among the factors that have reduced the economy's growth rate and it will continue to stall corrective efforts, unless the underlying fundamentals are addressed.

The Monetary Policy Committee statement was wise to have highlighted these matters.

QUICK READ

Delays in payments for construction projects, such as those funded by Infrastructure Leasing and Financial Services, precipitated the recent shadow banking crisis.

While RBI did well to highlight impediments to investment, of which poor contract enforcement is a major one, it is the government that must resolve payment problems.

GLOBAL VOICES

## The toxic alliance of Trump and Johnson

US president's low-key exit from a Nato summit, skipping the traditional press conference, would once have been perceived as a snub to the host government. But Donald Trump's departure from London will come as a relief to Boris Johnson. Mr. Trump is a fan of Brexit and praises the prime minister as the man to deliver it, but his presence in the country was an electoral hazard for the Conservatives. Some British voters admire Mr. Trump, or find him entertaining, but more do not. It is no recommendation for the Tory leader to be liked by a man notorious for dishonesty, ignorance, narcissism and chauvinism... The two men keeping a choreographed distance from one another does not dispel the perception of ideological proximity, which is problematic for Mr. Johnson on many levels.

Mr. Trump has been openly contemptuous of European Union leaders and engaged them in a destructive tariff war. Mr. Johnson was known in Brussels as a propagandizing Eurosceptic journalist before he was ever elected as an MP... Realpolitik compels continental leaders to do business with both men, but the sense that Britain and the US have been captured by a wrecking political culture has opened dangerous divisions... Here is an appetite in Britain to "get Brexit done", as Mr. Johnson glibly promises, but that is a product of fatigue with the process, not a licence to turn the country into a European franchise of Trumpism.

The Guardian, UK

## Ban Russia but spare its clean athletes

Russia's sports program now faces a crisis. The executive committee of the World Anti-Doping Agency, known as WADA, is to meet next Monday in Paris to decide whether Russia should be excluded from all international sporting events, including next year's Tokyo Olympics, for four years. The sanction is harsh, but the offence is odious: Russia has been caught anew manipulating records, smearing a whistle-blower and misleading the rest of the world. The executive committee should punish Russia but spare individual athletes who are clean, permitting them to compete as individuals without flag or anthem. The sordid tale begins at the Sochi Winter Olympics of 2014. Russian sport officials, with help from the Federal Security Service, ran a operation in which athletes were given performance-enhancing drugs that were concealed by clandestinely replacing tainted urine samples with clean urine.

Russia was suspended from international sport but reinstated in 2018 on a promise that it would provide WADA with a database from the Moscow laboratory... But when the database was turned over to WADA it contained a whole new set of deceptions when investigators compared it with a copy the agency had obtained from Mr. Rodchenkov [head of a Moscow laboratory] in 2017. [Hence,] the four-year ban on Russia is not too strong a punishment under the circumstances.

The Washington Post

## New Zealand's excuses on plastic pollution

Yet again, there is further concerning evidence that our much-touted environmental credentials simply do not stack up. What is piling up, however, are the mountains of rubbish New Zealand is sending offshore. Since China stopped taking our waste at the start of 2017, it has been revealed Indonesia is now our top dumping ground for plastic recycling, exports there having doubled between 2017 and 2018 to more than 12,000 tonnes. In September, Indonesia reportedly sent hundreds of containers of contaminated plastic back to where they came from, including five container loads back here. Yet that hasn't stopped mountains of non-recyclable waste being stockpiled, burnt as fuel or piling up in streets—ending up polluting residential areas and waterways. A study has found dangerously high levels of toxins entering the food chain near our new dumping grounds there.

Given the amount of waste in our world, there will be a need for a recycling industry for the foreseeable future. But it must be a legitimate industry wherever it operates, with the right aims and practices and safeguards, that benefit everyone. While it is pleasing to see the innovative efforts in the recycling field, it should still be remembered, even at best, recycling is actually a sign of failure... It is a blight to continue our "out of sight, out of mind" colonialist thinking by shipping off our waste for offshore processing in less developed countries.

The New Zealand Herald

## The administration must be held responsible

After months of negotiations and protests, the Buet administration has banned student politics on campus and finally taken a strong stance against ragging. Kudos to the institution for the making this move. The stance against ragging taken by the administration is unequivocal and strong. The offenders, who are found guilty of ragging that leads to death or serious harm will be expelled, and those who engage in verbal or physical abuse, extortion, shaming, temporary psychological harm, humiliation, threats, or other types of ragging will be punished. Indirect or direct political involvement has also been banned.

While all these seem like great policies, the policies in our educational institutions have been confined to paper for too long... This keeps happening, because the administration has not been vigilant enough for preventing these incidents of violence from taking place. Institutional autonomy has been exercised, and the excesses of specific political groups have always been ignored or overlooked, even when they clearly violated existing university codes. This goes to show that a solution beyond the codes is necessary—the administration needs to be responsible for the welfare of the students, and the students must be vigilant to keep it so.

The Dhaka Tribune

MY VIEW | PEN DRIVE

# Let's step on the gas and get domestic tourism booming

DEEP KALRA



is founder and group CEO of MakeMyTrip

I got a chance to visit Manali this summer with my wife after our last visit to the hill town almost two decades ago. We were thrilled to go back to a place we had great memories of. But there are a few things that stood out as we made our trip. The flying time from Delhi to Kullu airport is barely an hour, yet it costs more than a flight to Phuket. Our more adventurous friends who decided to drive from Delhi to Kullu had 18 hours spent on the road to regret their decision as they made their way through serpentine traffic jams. So, it is not surprising that many Indians who have travelled overseas tend to assess the return on their holiday investment by comparing it with an overseas jaunt.

With the United Nations World Tourism Organization predicting that 50 million Indians will travel abroad in 2020, up from 23 million in 2017, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call this year for us to visit 15 tourist destinations within the country by 2022

could not be better timed. It also comes close on the heels of a Reserve Bank of India report, which says that Indians are spending record amounts on international travel, almost \$600 million in June alone.

Oflate, overseas travel from India has got multiple tailwinds behind it: easier visas, cheaper and more direct flights, economical hotels and homestays, well-curated tourist circuits, and a wide range of activities and experiences.

However, this surge in outbound travel shouldn't be at the cost of domestic tourism, since we have so much to offer in our own country. We have come a long way in linking our cities through world-class airports, excellent highways and a wide network of trains, but last-mile connectivity remains a challenge and there is a lot left to be desired in terms of tourism-specific infrastructure. We need to think of integrated development of the tourism sector to enable competitiveness and sustain long-term growth.

The connectivity between tourist sites or development of tourism circuits needs to be taken up on priority so that one can explore places without accessibility blues. Once at the destination, tourist hubs should offer a variety of experiences and activities to keep

tourists engaged. A visit to the Taj is mesmerizing, but beyond that, do we offer enough to engage and appeal to all senses once tourists reach Agra? The ruins of Hampi leave one spellbound, but could we offer tourists more to make it a wholesome experience that lasts beyond a day's visit to the site?

We should take a leaf out of European cities that offer a variety of culinary, art and immersive activities that make travel to these hot spots an unmatched experience.

While travel and connectivity is one part of the story, the other part is accommodation. Thanks to heavy taxation, the cost of hotels in India is much higher than in many other countries. A lot of this is driven by differential taxation for luxury hotels. A beach-facing hotel in Phuket is available at almost half the cost in Goa or Kerala. Tourism is a competitive business in a global con-

text and India's neighbours both on its east and west have aggressively promoted tourism and made it a major source of their income. While the recent goods and services tax rate rationalization provides a big breather for the hospitality industry and should spur demand, 18% tax is still in a range higher than in South-East Asian countries, where taxes are below 10%.

The road map for domestic tourism growth involves addressing gaps that make India uncompetitive, while strengthening our distinct edge—our heritage, spirituality, diverse culture and much more.

Travelling for the sake of tourism is still a luxury for a lot of Indians, and attitudes are yet to evolve into vacations being considered an activity that ultimately enhances productivity. But, as the Prime Minister's call to action moves Indians to explore more of India, it would serve us well to ensure that the thrust is

towards responsible tourism—on the part of those who are in this business, as much as tourists.

Also, we need to step away from the usual hot spots and go to some unexplored regions. The tourist trail in India is still much too predictable and heavily trodden, and we risk ruining our popular destinations through over-tourism that threatens their fragile ecology. We have seen what the peak summer rush does to destinations like Shimla and Nainital year after year. This is why the concept of carrying capacity and last-mile infrastructure is critical as we look at ways to boost tourism growth. After all, the very places we visit to admire and enjoy should remain relevant and intact even for future generations.

Tourism can be a major engine of economic growth and has great capacity to create large-scale employment of diverse kind—from the most specialized to the relatively unskilled.

The Prime Minister's forceful call from the ramparts of the Red Fort in Delhi can be the rallying call for us to not just help this sunshine sector grow, but also help it grow the right way.

It's an opportunity that is ours to seize.



SHOBHANA SUBRAMANIAN

shobhana.subramanian@expressindia.com



# RBI policy signals huge govt deficit

RBI should have seen through inflation and cut rates, that it didn't suggests it is quite worried about FY21 govt borrowings

**GIVEN HOW RESERVE** Bank of India (RBI) has dropped its GDP growth forecast for FY20 to just 5%, one would have expected it to trim the repo rate, even if only by 10 basis points. Since June, the central bank has slashed the growth forecast by a chunky 200 basis points, indicating how removed from reality it was even a few months back. Indeed, the arguments put forward by the Governor justifying the pause—the repo rate remains unchanged at 5.15%—are unconvincing.

While there may be some concerns on inflation prompting the MPC to raise the headline inflation forecast—5.1%-4.7% in H2FY20 and 4.0-3.8% in H1FY21—given how fast growth is decelerating, the concerns appear to be overdone. If the risks are broadly balanced as the Governor said, these numbers are nowhere close to even 5.2% and there is room till 6%, so where is the anxiety coming from? Demand side pressures are likely to remain dormant—core inflation is tracking close to 2% down from much higher levels in June—and while prices of food may be going up, there is little chance this will disrupt the inflation trajectory given the large output gap; RBI needed to see through the inflation, but chose not to. In contrast, growth is threatening to slip to sub-4.5% levels, and there are few signs of recovery. It is perplexing that the MPC should have taken such a conservative view on inflation—targeting rather than choosing to be more flexible.

Governor Shaktikanta Das's observation that we need to wait for the impact of the measures taken by the government—cuts in corporation tax and the last-mile-fund for housing projects—to play out is hard to understand. What exactly are we waiting for? Even if the government does come up with a big stimulus package in the budget, that is some time away, and remedial action can be taken at the time. The only justifiable reason for a pause is that the fiscal deficit for FY20 is likely to see a big slippage, forcing the government to borrow more. That, then, could stoke inflation, though the large output gap reduces the likelihood. Also, it is possible RBI and the MPC believe they have done enough, and that they feel it is now the government's responsibility to remove any hurdles to investment.

By RBI's own admission, transmission has been slow; the combined 135 basis points cut in the repo since February this year has yielded 44 basis points of a cut in the interest rate on new loans at a time when the system has been awash with liquidity for six months.

However, as this paper has argued for two years now, cuts in the repo rate mean very little because banks are focused, as they should be, on their cost of deposits. If transmission has remained weak all these years, leaving Governors wringing their hands in frustration, it is because lenders are unwilling to let their margins contract. After many moons, deposit rates are now at multi-year lows while loan rates are not. Also, deposits are coming in at a reasonably good pace of close to 10% year-on-year, so there is ample liquidity.

But, now, there are two new problems. One, banks have turned extremely cautious about lending to businesses, which is not surprising given the quality of corporate balance sheets continues to deteriorate. So, they are not about to write cheques for enterprises that look shaky.

Second, with the economy having slowed to a crawl, industry has little incentive to invest. The output gap remains negative and is expected to remain so through 2020, and the manufacturing sector is doing badly because demand has slumped, so there is no reason to add to capacity just yet. The top business houses have picked up stressed assets through the M&A route, and the borrowing on this count is complete. Few well-run companies have reason to borrow too much.

RBI is right in saying the government needs to do the heavy lifting. So far, we have seen very little in terms of measures to stimulate the economy. The sharp cut in the corporation tax rate was totally a misguided move that will help only rich companies, many of whom will not invest a penny given the nature of their businesses. And, that will cost the exchequer some ₹1 lakh crore. Given India's poor infrastructure, little ease of doing business, biased rules and regulations, and weak labour laws, not too many players are likely to want to invest in India. Simply wishing for a revival will not get us one—the high-frequency data for October and November are very disappointing, especially since October was a big festive month. Wholesale volumes reported by manufacturers show CV despatches to dealers in November fell some 20%, despatches of two-wheelers were down 16%, and car volumes down 5%. These can't be called green shoots. RBI probably knows that and is worried the government will roll out a big stimulus in February. Thursday's pause, however, sent benchmark bond yields to 6.61%, a two-month high, with the markets apprehensive that government borrowings in FY21 would be much higher than in the current year. Unless yields trend down soon, borrowing costs will rise again. We cannot afford the start of another vicious cycle.

## StoppingRAPE

Systemic solutions needed, from wholesale change in attitudes towards women to beefing up technological aids to policing

**THE HYDERABAD GANGRAPE**—murder has foregrounded, once again, the pervasiveness and brutality of sexual crimes against women. The revival of public debate on the issue of women's safety with renewed vigour has exposed the sheer inability of the state to preserve the most fundamental right to life and dignity for about half its population. Lawmakers vociferously demanded stricter punishments for rapists in Parliament, from surgical and chemical castration to public lynching and more liberal awarding of the death penalty as a deterrent. The parliamentarians' statements betray, at best, their helplessness in dealing with a systemic problem; at worst, it indicates a failure to recognise the systemic nature of the problem of sexual violence. Neither case instills confidence.

Making public spaces safe for women is unachievable without wholesale change in attitudes towards and about women. That will be a multi-generational endeavour. Meanwhile, the state must make spaces safer and more gender-inclusive. For instance, simply reviving the beat constable system, as recommended by the NITI Aayog in 2016, and increasing the number of PCR vans can do much to make public spaces safer for women. Coverage and surveillance of public spaces, including roads, parking spaces, and buses, by CCTV cameras, too, should act as a deterrent. India could also look to emulate the US's strategy of employing drones for public safety. Reducing police response time—the average response time in India still remains abysmally high—would immensely improve both crime prevention and investigation. The judicial system, too, needs an overhaul—the need is not only to speed up the process of addressing cases of sexual violence but also to provide affordable legal aid to survivors. It is shameful that over half a decade after the Centre established the Nirbhaya Fund in the aftermath of the Delhi gangrape, its corpus remains largely unused. Telangana has only used 8% of the ₹1.23 crore that was allocated to it.

## AGRI REFORM

FARM BUSINESS SCHOOLS CAN REMEDY INDIAN AGRICULTURE'S MARKET DISCONNECT BY BUILDING CAPACITY THROUGH RE-TRAINING, AND RESTRUCTURING EXTENSION DELIVERY

# From production to profitability

**THE IDEA OF** doubling farmers' incomes by 2022, when the country completes 75 years of its independence, was shared by prime minister Narendra Modi at a *kisan* rally in Bareilly (Uttar Pradesh) in February 2016. The announcement triggered a multitude of committees, panels, and agendas to be set up at various tiers of the government in pursuance of this objective.

Despite zealous efforts made by government agencies toward fulfilment of this goal, the state of farmers and agriculture has shown little or no improvement. We must look for new pathways that can leverage India's advantages of abundance in land, water, fertile soil, cheap labour, and favourable agro-climatic conditions to the benefit of farmers as well as farming. Farmer business school (FBS) is a new idea picking up steam across developing countries for making agriculture a profitable enterprise.

Conceptualised by the Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, and inspired by its farmer field schools, FBS is an innovative training strategy for farmers to build entrepreneurial skills and management competencies to transform their usual farming into a profitable business venture.

It operates at the village level, and can be started by any number of individuals or agencies, including public sector extension services, civil society, farmer associations, or cooperatives. Farmers meet at a time of their convenience, usually for an entire season, to synchronise learnings with the various stages of a given production cycle. Extension officers and lead farmers are trained as facilitators to ensure smooth conduct of sessions and coverage of relevant materials. The school employs an "entrepreneurial learning-by-doing" approach, which is referred to as the Participatory Mutual

**SMRITI VERMA**  
Research analyst, IFPRI  
Views are personal

Training and Learning Approach. Farmers work in small groups and learn to address business and marketing challenges and opportunities through collaboration and collective action based on discussions, practical exercises, and self-study. Farmers are taken step-by-step through the basics of farm business management based on their own production patterns. They train to take complex farming decisions in an iterative manner, to conduct it as any other business. At a farmer business school, farmers are not passively lectured on technicalities of production, about which they already possess knowledge; instead, they are trained to use simple decision support tools, checklists, and strategic questions that compel them to think like entrepreneurs, and act to maximise their profits from farming. This is what sets farmer business schools apart from other typical farmer training programs. The framework of an FBS is such that each farmer is largely responsible for his/her own learning.

The gap in Indian agriculture at present is its disconnect with the market—the idea of farm business schools has the promise to remedy this malady of Indian agriculture by hitting the nail on the head with its focus on transforming farmers' decision-making capabilities to respond to market signals. For instance, smallholders learn to assess market demands through an interactive approach, reflecting on their own production experiences, making observations, and generating new ideas that they can experiment

**SMRITI VERMA**  
Research analyst, IFPRI  
Views are personal

during the season. Increasing globalisation of agricultural systems has exposed smallholders to greater shocks and risks, without commensurate state support, especially in developing countries like India. Smallholders, due to their small marketable surpluses, increasingly run the risk of being swept aside by the wave of competition from mammoth commercial companies in the food business that have large-scale standardised production and disproportionately better market access. How must extension services remould to correspond to emerging needs of farming as a business? To actively support market-oriented farming, appropriate capacity building through re-training and restructuring of extension delivery is essential. Farmers need support on achieving efficiency in production activities, refocussing from production to profitability. The emphasis of FBS is also on sustainability, putting scarce resources to their most efficient use. Crop diversification is one mechanism through which this can be achieved.

Efficient handling of complex farm management opportunities and challenges in production and marketing requires capacity building among farmers and a learning framework where they can learn from their own as well as others' experiences. The most essential

steps in planning the farm business include delineating its visions and goals, strategic planning, choosing and testing the feasibility of enterprises, and developing a business plan based on market evaluations. This is where the FBS comes in: rather than solving business problems for farmers, it helps them develop the knowledge and core managerial competencies to fully understand their problems, its causes, and derive experimental solutions.

Countries like Philippines, Indonesia, Ghana, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, and Tanzania, among others in Asia and Africa, have initiated Farmer Business Schools with diversified partner structures, though public extension services dominate. Only a few years after their introduction, FBSs in Africa have witnessed rapid expansion through adaptation for a wide range of crops such as cotton, rice, sesame, horticultural products, cocoa, cashew, and coffee, among others. In most projects, 20-44% of farmers trained are women, making agriculture more gender-inclusive. Reportedly, FBS trainings have been conducive to farm

business growth in almost all projects. From the FBS, farmers have acquired better financial management skills, doing basic cost-production calculations on their own. They can better plan farm operations, follow a more efficient cropping calendar, and, most importantly, realise what they had been missing in making agriculture a profitable business like any other. India, too, should experiment with this novel and pertinent idea to train Indian farmers to graduate from simply producing to profitably managing their market-oriented farm business if the game of agriculture in India is to change forever.

Efficient handling of complex farm management opportunities and challenges in production and marketing requires capacity building among farmers

# Carbon risks reflected in stock prices

New research shows that markets are distinguishing among companies based on climate risks in significant ways, and the effects have been notably larger since the 2015 Paris Agreement

**CLIMATE SPECIALISTS HAVE** warned for years about a "carbon bubble" in which markets ignore or massively undervalue the risks to companies from climate change. Two new studies suggest, however, that financial markets have started seriously pricing carbon risk, especially since the Paris Agreement of 2015.

Whatever its other effects, that agreement may thus go down in history as the beginning of the end for any carbon bubble. With policymakers meeting in Madrid this week for the UN's annual climate conference, the new research should provide some comfort that their actions will be reflected in financial market prices.

One of the new studies, by Christina Atanasova of Simon Fraser University and Eduardo Schwartz of the University of California, Los Angeles, examines North American oil producers. In a sample of almost 700 oil companies, they find that, after controlling for multiple other factors, stock market values are higher for producers with larger reserves. This would be consistent with the carbon bubble perspective.

But, the research also finds that the growth of such reserves is associated with lower valuations, a trend that cuts against the carbon bubble view. And, when the authors dig deeper into the data, they find many clues that markets are pricing carbon risks in more meaningful ways.

For example, when reserves are divided into "developed" (which can be extracted from existing wells) or "undeveloped" (which generally require new wells), the developed reserves raise stock values but undeveloped reserves reduce them. This pattern is what one would expect if markets are awakening to climate risks, the authors note, suggesting the possibility that "future oil reserves that are generated from current capital expenditures will most

**PETER R ORSZAG**  
Bloomberg

likely remain in the ground." The takeaway: "market participants recognise, at least partially, that these investments are potentially negative NPV (net present value) projects that will destroy firm value."

Atanasova and Schwartz also find evidence that the adverse effects on valuation are caused disproportionately by companies with high extraction costs (thus making it less likely they will yield sufficient future returns to justify their costs) and for reserves located in countries with tougher climate policies (which would likely reduce the future returns).

In addition, the negative effect of reserve growth on valuations has been much stronger after the Paris Agreement than it was before. If the agreement helped to awaken markets to climate risks, this difference would make sense.

The other recent analysis, by Patrick Bolton of Columbia Business School and Marcin Kacperczyk of Imperial College London, assesses a wider array of companies, numbering more than 3,000, that extend well beyond the oil industry. The title of their paper is "Do Investors Care about Carbon Risk?" Their answer is "largely consistent with the view that investors are pricing in a carbon risk premium at the firm level."

The authors find that the market puts lower value on, and requires higher returns from, companies with higher levels and growth rates of emissions. They also conclude that the market started to require significantly more compensation for climate risk after the Paris Agreement.

Interestingly, both studies conclude that institutional investors are not dri-

ving the markets' recent climate-related penalties. Despite the heightened attention to the issue among such investors, Atanasova and Schwartz find no material effect from institutional investors on the size of the climate penalty associated with undeveloped reserves. Similarly, Bolton and Kacperczyk find that divestment effects from large investors do not generally explain carbon risk pricing patterns. Such divestment tends to occur only in certain industries (such as oil and gas) and to be associated only with a narrow definition of emissions (so-called Scope 1, or direct, emissions).

The new studies together suggest that markets are distinguishing among companies based on climate risks in significant ways, and that the effects have been notably larger since the 2015 Paris Agreement. The most extreme version of the carbon bubble, in which carbon risks are ignored by markets altogether, is thus no longer an accurate picture of how stocks are priced.

What is not clear from either study, however, is whether the market is penalising future climate exposure sufficiently to reflect the risks. In other words, what if the magnitude of how financial markets price climate risks still underestimates the actual future risks? In that case, some carbon bubble effects would persist.

What is clear is that climate risks will continue to increase over time. It's also clear, based on the latest research, that the market will respond to those risks.

*This column does not necessarily reflect the views of the editorial board or Bloomberg LP and its owners*

## Crime and religion

The controversial Godman Nithyananda, who was accused of rape and child abduction, and declared a fugitive under the Indian justice system has now declared that he is the supremo of Kailasa, a Hindu Rashtra set up for aspiring and persecuted Hindus. Not long ago, he grabbed the attention of many with his attempt on YouTube to disprove the theory of relativity, and claims to have developed a software to teach cattle Tamil and Sanskrit. While the location of the greatest Hindu nation, as claimed by Nithyananda, remained unconfirmed, his Kailasa.org web portal claims that the new nation has a flag, a government, and a university. As a country considered as a sacred land or a *Punyabhoomi*, India remains and continues to remain one of most sought after spiritual destination for many. But, in the garb of *sanatana*, godmen like Nithyananda are doing more harm than good to Hinduism, with their alleged criminal activities and by taking their followers for ride. — M Jeyaram, Sholavandan

## Citizenship Amendment Bill

The Cabinet's nod for the controversial Bill granting citizenship to undocumented non-Muslims from Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan who came to India on or before December 31, 2014 has raised the hackles of the Opposition, and all those who believe in the secular character of the country. The Opposition has rightly termed the Bill as an attempt at communal polarisation, and the Congress has threatened to move the Supreme Court. Inner-Line Permit (ILP) states and Sixth Schedule areas in the North-East have been exempt from the Bill. The Centre would do well to look at all religions in the same light, and drop the contentious Citizenship Amendment Bill.

— NJ Ravi Chander, Bengaluru

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## Crime and religion

The controversial Godman Nithyananda, who was accused of rape and child abduction, and declared a fugitive under the Indian justice system has now declared that he is the supremo of Kailasa, a Hindu Rashtra set up for aspiring and persecuted Hindus. Not long ago, he grabbed the attention of many with his attempt on YouTube to disprove the theory of relativity, and claims to have developed a software to teach cattle Tamil and Sanskrit. While the location of the greatest Hindu nation, as claimed by Nithyananda, remained unconfirmed, his Kailasa.org web portal claims that the new nation has a flag, a government, and a university. As a country considered as a sacred land or a *Punyabhoomi*, India remains and continues to remain one of most sought after spiritual destination for many. But, in the garb of *sanatana*, godmen like Nithyananda are doing more harm than good to Hinduism, with their alleged criminal activities and by taking their followers for ride. — M Jeyaram, Sholavandan

● Write to us at feletters@expressindia.com



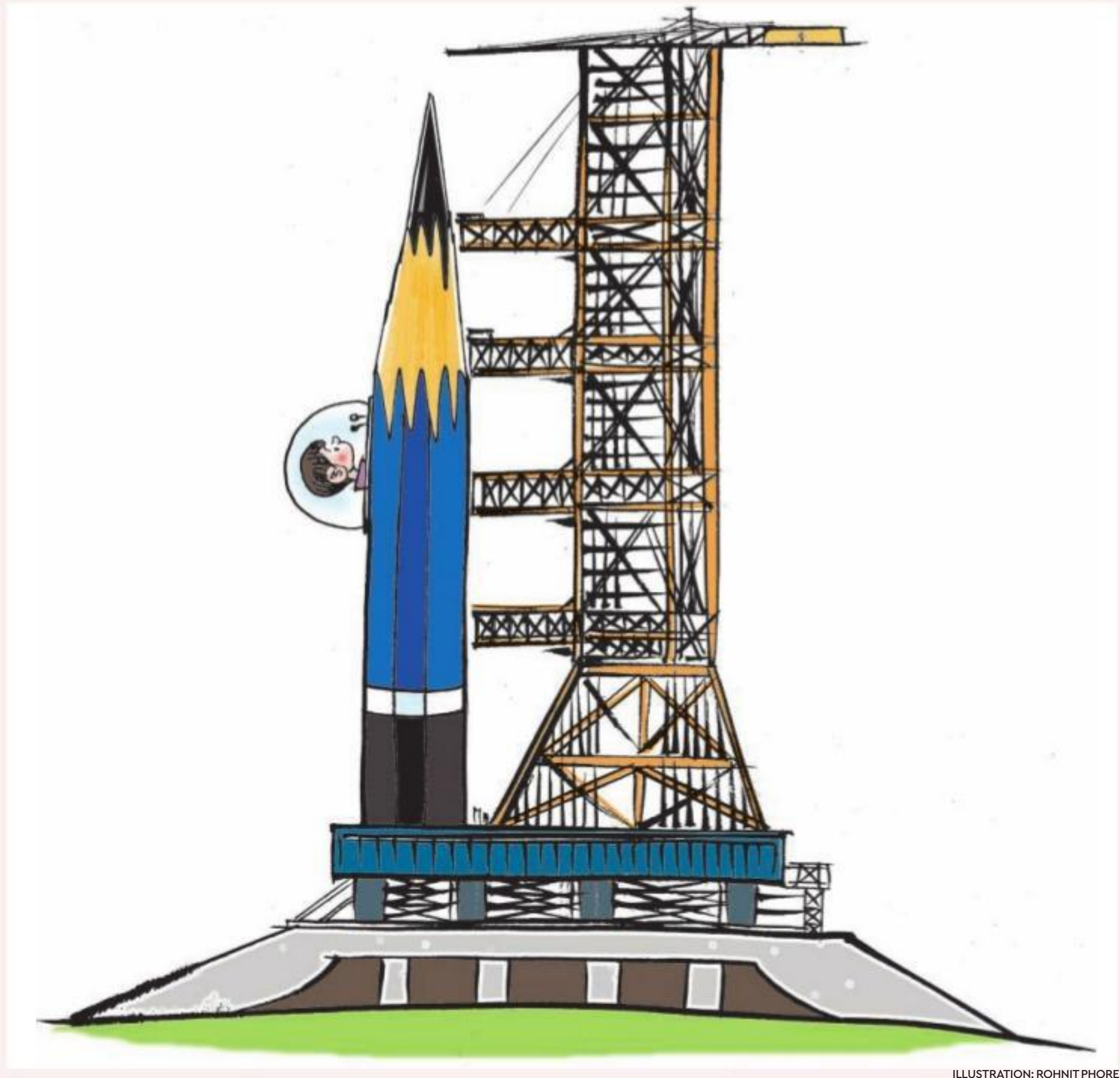


ILLUSTRATION: ROHNIT PHORE

ASHISH DHAWAN

The author is founder & chairman, Central Square Foundation



FOUNDATIONAL LEARNING

# Let's not delay the NEP

We need to focus on foundational learning. Today's primary school-going students will join India's workforce by 2030, and to reap the benefits of our demographic dividend, we need to start with building a strong foundation. We know that if we fail on this, we fail on everything: We fail on poverty reduction, human capital, GDP, and so on

THE DRAFT NATIONAL Education Policy (NEP) 2019—the first update in almost three decades—is potentially a game changer as it aims to bring some long-awaited shifts in the education continuum and offers a clear pathway of reform. The draft NEP has identified issues of 'early childhood education' and 'foundational learning', which are at the core of the learning crisis, and it has the right set of ideas when it comes to giving importance to the liberal arts model for transforming higher education.

There has been an overwhelming response to the draft document, and the committee has done an outstanding job in synthesising diverse viewpoints. The government must now act quickly to finalise the document and pass it through the legislature. The focus must shift to its implementation, as it is going to be a complex task requiring sustained and concerted efforts. There are many steps that the education ecosystem will have to take at both national and state levels before this document can make its desired impact. The big ideas in the document will need unrelenting focus by the government, and various organisations and individuals who are committed to education reform are willing to come forward to support the government on ideas, innovations and funding.

Here, I will focus on one of the big ideas mentioned in the draft policy that needs to become a national priority—i.e. foundational learning. According to the draft NEP, India's learning crisis is rooted in foundational learning, and it rightly states that "our highest priority must be to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school and beyond by 2025. The rest of the policy will be largely irrelevant for such a large portion of our students if this most basic learning is not first achieved."

A World Bank report that was released last month shows that 53% of all children in low- and middle-income countries suffer from learning poverty, which means that they are unable to read and understand a simple text by the age of 10. To galvanise this progress and to meet the Sustainable Development Goal on education (SDG 4: Quality Education), the World Bank launched a new learning target to cut the learning poverty rate by at least half before 2030. This ambitious goal can only be achieved if India—which has the maximum number of primary school-going children—can show a massive improvement in foundational learning and cut its current learning poverty level of 54.8% by more than half in the next decade.

Universal attainment of foundational learning is of paramount importance. And since we do not have the resources to focus on so many things at the same time, my one advice to the government would be that they should maintain the sharp focus on foundational literacy and numeracy, and then phase in other priorities, as needed.

To translate this goal into real action, there are some critical ideas that will help operationalise the focus on foundational learning.

First, a strong thrust by the Centre in the form of a national mission backed by technical and funding guidelines will catalyse demand for critical reforms at the state level. In the current financing structure, foundational learning is largely dependent on the Union government's schemes, but the central government can ring-fence funding to states for early grade interventions; in turn, states could be mandated to share a three- to five-year plan on how they plan to achieve universal foundational learning.

Second, clear goal setting and alignment of sharp metrics. In primary schools, a teacher's daily dilemma is to figure out what to teach and to whom. To complete the curriculum, teachers usually choose to focus on the 'top of the class', leaving others to catch up on their own. This can be solved by identifying and communicating well-defined indicators or competencies such as alphabet and word recognition, oral reading fluency and comprehension of short stories. Setting these expectations amongst teachers and parents, and socialising them at district and block level by introducing competition, will ensure action in the classrooms.

Third, the central government will also need to ensure availability of independent, reliable and comparable data to all the actors on a regular basis to create an environment where there is both an urgency towards achieving the critical goals by 2025 and providing incentives for improvement at all levels. Put together by independent organisations, this will help both the Centre and states identify the gaps that need to be addressed and customise solutions.

All this calls for a sense of urgency. Today's primary school-going students will join India's workforce by 2030, and to reap the benefits of our demographic dividend, we need to start with building a strong foundation. We know that if we fail on this, we fail on everything: We fail on poverty reduction, human capital, GDP, and so on... there is a lot riding on bridging this critical gap in our education system. The NEP, once implemented, can play a critical role in the transformation of our education system and ensure that today's primary school students become productive and empowered citizens of India who will drive the country towards its \$10-trillion ambition. To put the policy into action, I am confident that the state departments, educators, NGOs, parents and students will bring the sum of their considerable talent, commitment and resourcefulness to bear so that we see meaningful, measurable progress.

The government should maintain the sharp focus on foundational literacy and numeracy, and then phase in other priorities, as needed

## Curing medical devices sector

MALAY MITRA

The author is regulatory advisor, Medical Device, Drugs, Cosmetics, and former deputy drugs controller, CDSCO

### Will a separate Medical Devices Authority reinvigorate the medical devices sector in India?

A ROBUST REGULATORY mechanism has been a fairly long wait for India's semi-regulated medical devices industry. At a time when healthcare experts are expecting a separate regulatory framework for medical devices, the government is in the process of formulating a Medical Devices Authority (MDA) for the vast range of products in the sector. With the dichotomy between CDSCO (Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation) and BIS (Bureau of Indian Standards)—and the NITI Aayog also having its say—divided in opinions, one will have to wait to assess how successful the new body might prove to be. According to sources, BIS will continue to frame guidelines but these would be regulated by MDA. Also, the proposed body will be separate from CDSCO, which will continue to be the regulator for drugs.

Here, we are going against international norms. For instance, in the US, the FDA is the agency under which medical devices are controlled, and FDA's Center for Devices and Radiological Health regulates firms that manufacture, repackaging, relabel, and/or import medical devices sold in the US. Similarly, the European Medicines Agency has a medical devices agency. Same is in Japan. In such a scenario, a separate agency to regulate medical devices will be unique to India and may pose its own challenges.

One must ask if instead of forming a new body, wouldn't it be better to have the powers and working invested in a self-contained division within CDSCO? This would save costs and, more importantly, be within a regulatory system to share expertise. Also, non-compliance with global standards and safety guidelines on the domestic front is a major loophole in ensuring the quality of locally-manufactured medical devices; India lacks infrastructure to test the quality of such devices. The new mechanism and multiple layers of a separate MDA might lead to more confusion amongst manufacturers, further hampering the ecosystem growth.

It would be interesting to see if India is able to fill in the gaps in the fields of R&D, manufacturing and testing facilities, with MDA in place. While we have policy mechanisms and regulatory practices to compare India's domestic produce, the true testament of quality can only be attributed to adoption and implementation of international harmonised standards rather than coming up with a new mechanism altogether. Another problem is the human resource crunch at multiple levels—a shortage of inspectors to carry out quality assessments, crippling state of manufacturing units and poor regulatory environment are major challenges.

Deloitte report had noted that "India has not been able to develop itself as a strong manufacturing base for medical technology. The industry remains dependent on imports for meeting its domestic requirements." This also raises eyebrows towards the ongoing US-India trade talks and speculations around the pricing mechanism, which highlights the need for a scientific and promising alternative that thinks beyond capping prices of select devices (cardiac stents, knee implants).

For the government to realise the need of wider accessibility of healthcare services, one needs to create a holistic environment that supports the establishment of a new regulatory regime. With its primary objective of ensuring safety, quality and efficacy of medical devices, MDA would be able to focus on globally harmonising the standards of domestic as well as imported devices only with universally-accepted and harmonised norms like in the rest of the world. In what looks like a mutual (the government and the industry) inclination as per ongoing negotiations between the two countries (US-India trade deal) towards trade margin rationalisation (TMR), it could be the next scientific step to solving the crisis around price capping in the medical devices industry. If calculated the right way, TMR could be the hope the healthcare industry in India needs. However, it would be incorrect to jump to any conclusion regarding the success or failure of the new MDA before it is even formulated.

One must ask if instead of forming a new body, wouldn't it be better to have the powers invested in a self-contained division within the CDSCO?

THINK TANK ICRIER recently released the report 'Economic Implications of Cross-Border Data Flows', which is pertinent to ongoing discourse on data localisation, especially as initiated by the draft Personal Data Protection Bill (PDP).

The PDP by the expert committee under Justice Srikrishna (Srikrishna Committee) suggested staggered localisation of personal data from the perspective of protecting privacy. The white paper by the Srikrishna Committee that accompanied the draft PDP noted that "the representations made to us have not persuaded us of the possible economic implications of local storage and processing of personal data in India. It is our considered view that the size and potential of the Indian market trumps the additional cost that some entities may have to bear on account of a mandate to process personal data locally."

It seems, for the committee, the understanding of 'economic implications' was restricted to operative costs of relocating data servers in India. The understanding was thereby limited to 'some entities', predominantly those engaged in digital services, and the committee perhaps was of the opinion that the economies of scale offered by a market as large as India more than offset the initial 'cost'.

However, the actual economic cost of data localisation goes beyond mere relocation of data servers in India, and the ICRIER report is perhaps the first such detailed study that tries to capture the whole picture.

## Data localisation will impact GDP

Data localisation can trigger 'contagion effect' on other sectors, affecting costs and operations for such businesses

AMITAYU SENGUPTA

The author works with the Internet and Mobile Association of India. Views are personal

In the report, the ICRIER team has estimated the impact of cross-border data flows on India's international trade at the macro level. The report finds that 1% increase in international internet bandwidth leads to an increase of \$696.71 million in total volume of goods trade for India. Between 2016-17 and 2017-18, about 12% of the growth of India's total volume of trade can be attributed to increase in international bandwidth. The impact is much higher when bilateral services trade is added into consideration. Therefore, in any form, a freeze on cross-border data flows risks derailing this positive network effect.

The report by itself has certain limitations that need to be taken into cognisance. For instance, it takes international bandwidth as a proxy for volume of cross-border data flows. Consequently, this study cannot distinguish what proportion of actual cross-border data flows are to be affected by the provisions of localisation of personal data (given the PDP keeps anonymised data outside its ambit), nor distinguish in terms of direction of data flows—inflow or outflow from India. Moreover, there is no analysis of sectoral impact—for instance, which sectors will be



affected and how, which all services sectors are most susceptible, and what impact will it have on other sectors?—or how any data localisation will alter trade balance (how much does it affect imports, or how are exports affected?).

Nonetheless, the report clearly draws the bigger picture of data, data flows, and how intrinsically it is linked to the overall economy. Much of the argument over data localisation is guilty of being myopic as they perceive data as a specific asset/resource particular to digital services. The ICRIER report proves that data flows cannot be seen in silos. As a corollary,

regulations like data localisation are not mere sectoral regulations that will only affect the digital services sector, but will have much broader implications.

A critical component of the study is the opportunity cost of data localisation, based on industry survey conducted for the purpose. The report suggests that opportunity costs of data localisation vary based on various parameters: the industry in consideration, the size and maturity stage of the business, local or multinational service providers, etc. IT, telecom, financial services are most likely to be directly impacted by data localisation. But

the report also touches upon the far-reaching consequences such a policy can have.

For instance, as the report reveals, a major food and lifestyle company of Indian origin that uses cloud services hosted in Singapore is worried about the quality and cost of data services under forced data localisation. Thus, data localisation can trigger a form of 'contagion effect' on other sectors, thereby affecting costs and operations for such businesses, even though they may not directly involve in cross-border data flow businesses.

Any policy mandate of data localisation by the government of India also risks consequences that can impact the Indian economy. For instance, the report highlights that the risk of retaliatory measures (by other jurisdictions) and potential fragmentation of the internet need to be evaluated as these are bound to have repercussions for the Indian economy. Similarly, the economic cost of delayed availability of latest services/technologies and the overall negative impact data localisation can have on innovation is another area of concern. This is critical given the nascent start-up sector in India and how much India is actually banking on this sector for the near future.

The ICRIER report captures the various direct and indirect avenues by which data localisation can affect the Indian economy. Even though the report may not quantify them all, it does provide enough macro insights for a more nuanced and informed choice on the matter, for both policymakers and industry alike.



# The Tribune

ESTABLISHED IN 1881

## Bogey of citizenship

Govt should tread cautiously on divisive Bill

WITH the Union Cabinet approving the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, the ruling BJP has taken a major stride towards fulfilling its poll promise of granting Indian citizenship to Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists and Christians escaping persecution from neighbouring countries. The primary beneficiaries would be non-Muslim refugees from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Afghanistan, whereas Muslim immigrants such as Myanmar’s Rohingya face the prospect of deportation. The Cabinet nod comes a couple of days after Home Minister Amit Shah virtually set the agenda for the next General Election by declaring that every infiltrator would be identified and expelled by 2024. That’s his deadline for implementing a pan-India National Register of Citizens (NRC), notwithstanding the messy exercise carried out in Assam.

A legislation under which nationality will be granted on the basis of religion is fraught with communal complications. A witch-hunt targeting a particular community will fly in the face of ‘Sabka saath, sabka vikas’, the NDA government’s lofty slogan. The powers that be have so far been unable to delink the Bill from the NRC, leading to the perception that both are aimed at religious segregation rather than ensuring that every Indian citizen, irrespective of his or her faith, is accounted for. The government also faces the challenge of addressing concerns raised by Northeastern states regarding the unabated influx of ‘outsiders’.

Since times immemorial, India has been a melting pot of cultures and religions. The all-embracing inclusiveness is manifested in Kerala’s Cheraman Juma Mosque, said to be the subcontinent’s oldest Muslim place of worship that was built during the era of Prophet Muhammad. An exclusionist policy is not only against Indian tradition but also at variance with the secular values enshrined in the Constitution. Earlier this year, UN human rights experts had resented India’s decision to send a few Rohingya families back to Myanmar. Under international law, States are prohibited from forcing individuals to return to countries where they would be at risk of persecution. The harassment of immigrants in the name of national security would only cause domestic strife. A pragmatic — and least disruptive — approach should be the way forward.

## Leaving a bad taste

Urgent steps needed to arrest onion prices

GOOD for Nirmala Sitharaman if she doesn’t eat much onion. But as Finance Minister of a country of 1.2 billion people, for the majority of whom onion is the kitchen staple, her insensitivity towards the skyrocketing price of the humble bulb crop leaves a bad taste. While this comment made by her during a debate in Parliament prompted the opposition to call it her ‘Marie Antoinette moment’, the common man, already burdened by inflation, is not amused. With the Jharkhand Assembly elections under way, the issue has the potential to snowball and even cost the ruling party electorally. The BJP, having been stung earlier, should know. Its government in Delhi was ousted in 1998 to a large extent due to popular outrage over the spurt in onion prices.

As the price of onion crosses the Rs 100 per kg mark across the states, both farmers and consumers — a huge constituency — are teary-eyed. Having procured the present stock in the last rabi season for a pittance, it is only the middlemen who are making a killing. That such sudden surges in the prices of basic vegetables — onions, tomatoes, potatoes — have become a regular feature speaks poorly of the politico-economic response that swings around tweaking import and export norms. Fulfilling the PM’s poll promise of doubling farmers’ income requires assiduous steps to lift the agri-market. It is bogged down with hoarding, official incompetence and nexus with traders ramping up prices. In addition, proper storage and farm insurance reaching the beneficiaries are vital to cushion another bane of peasants: errant weather.

To maintain a balance between ensuring a remunerative price to the growers and lid on retail rates, the farmers need to get a safety net in times of glut. Efforts to encourage them to tie up with food technology investors have not yielded the desired result. Export and domestic use of processed, dehydrated onions as flakes, powder and granules can help see the end of distress sales. There’s many a layer, yet, to be peeled off.

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

Man’s sensitivity to the little things and insensitivity to the greatest are the signs of a strange disorder. — **Blaise Pascal**

### ON THIS DAY...100 YEARS AGO

## The Tribune.

LAHORE, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 1919

### Martial Law Proclamation Not Read Everywhere.

THIS, in bare outline, is the story, and even this bare outline is enough to stagger humanity. But the bare outline gives one no idea of the actual facts of the case in the absence of the necessary connecting links. These links were all supplied by the General (Dyer) himself. In reply to a question by Mr. Justice Rankin, that neither he nor anyone else had taken any adequate steps to explain to the people that, although there had been no proclamation of Martial Law, there was *de facto* Martial Law is no every-day phenomenon in India, and perhaps not one man in a thousand had any idea of what it meant. Its necessity has since been admitted by the authorities themselves, because when Martial Law did come to be introduced notices were issued explaining to the public what it meant and what steps were contemplated under it. Secondly, the General admitted, in reply to questions by Lord Hunter, that the proclamation prohibiting public meetings was not read at many parts of the city at all, and that there may have been a good many at the meeting who never heard of the proclamations. In reply to a question by Pandit Jagat Narain the witness admitted that he did not know if the proclamation had been read and explained in the surroundings villages at all. As a considerable number of those present at the meeting must have come from the villages, the significance of this admission is obvious. Thirdly, the General admitted that he took no step, between 12.30, when he came to learn that a meeting was going to take place, and 4.30 when the meeting did take place, to prevent the crowd from assembling. Fourthly, he admitted that no warning was given to the crowd before the opening of fire, and this in spite of the fact that the phrase “if necessary” in the proclamation might easily mean “unless the crowd peacefully dispersed on being asked to do so by the police or the military.”

# The death of a dream

Fathima Latheef’s suicide points to the tragic story of our academic culture



AVIJIT PATHAK  
SOCIOLOGIST

WHEN I came to know about Fathima Latheef’s suicide, I realised the pain of my wounded self. Because as a teacher engaging with hundreds of young minds like her, I experienced the tragic end of a possibility: a dream that inspired this bright, young girl from Kerala to come to IIT-Chennai and pursue higher education in philosophy and humanities. It was a dream of self-exploration — a journey to the fascinating world of books, thoughts and ideas; it was a dream of psychic and social mobility. But then, it would be wrong to see Fathima’s story in isolation. As a teacher, I have no hesitation in saying that a suicide reveals many problematic layers of campus life and associated academic practices.

Fathima was bright; or, to put it otherwise, she was ‘topper’ material. Did she experience severe performance anxiety; the constant pressure to excel, and retain the ‘self’ of the topper? I see my own students — bright and dreamy like Fathima — living with terrible pressure. Quite often, in an aspirational society like ours, many of these students come to universities with a heavy baggage of societal expectations. From parents to neighbours to school principals, there seems to be only one lesson they have learned. They have to succeed. Success measured through grades is the assured road to social/economic mobility; and failure is a matter of shame. The site of higher learning has become a war zone, and there is no winner. In a way, everyone is a loser. If you fail, you are condemned and stigmatised. And if you win, you die — psychologically and spiritually —



WE’VE FAILED: The site of higher learning is now a war zone. And there is no winner.

Instead of indulging in sensational politics, let us try to create a stress-free, inclusive culture of learning that values the uniqueness of every student.

because of the pressure to retain the topper position. And even the slightest fall from that elevated position makes life miserable and meaningless. Is this the reason why in this hyper-competitive/performance-centric academic culture, psychic anxiety and acute loneliness affect the mental health of many young minds?

Furthermore, in many of these centres of excellence, as teachers we put enormous pressure on our students. There is no catharsis, no joy, no celebration in academics. Tutorials, seminars, examinations, books and papers: with absolute mechanisation and ritualisation, a young learner keeps consuming varieties of knowledge capsules. There is no breathing space; there is no possibility of calmness and mindfulness; there is no communion with the treasure of life — looking at the sky, and experiencing the beauty of idleness. We have transformed young minds into horses in a race. The knowledge they are compelled to acquire does not liberate them; it makes them incapable of meeting the challenges of life with grace and

patience. This is the tragic story of our academic culture.

There is yet another factor that needs to be understood. For instance, Fathima’s suicide, as many reports disseminated through social media suggest, indicate the possibility of some sort of psychic/symbolic violence she might have experienced because of her identity, and a problematic relationship with some faculty members. Quite often, in a heterogeneous and highly stratified society like ours, filled with violence emanating from asymmetrical power relations, we hear diverse narratives of victimisation in the name of caste, gender, religion and ethnicity. It is a fairly complex domain, and in the name of finding some conspiracy, if we sensationalise the issue through instant judgement, we would not be able to go deeper. Many studies have revealed that there is no denying the fact that our educational centres do experience what happens in the larger society: the act of humiliating the marginalised and the minorities. Moreover, as teachers, we are not

angels, and it may not be altogether impossible to find, say, male/‘forward caste’ teachers from the dominant community conveying the gestures and symbols that humiliate Dalits or the minorities. And for a vulnerable young mind that is at the receiving end, this violence might prove to be fatal.

However, it is equally important to realise that the hyper-sensitivity to this social evil, as well as some sort of reductionist identity politics (implying the belief that never can one see beyond one’s caste or religion), have created a toxic culture of perpetual doubt and suspicion. As a result, we refuse to see that there are limits to stereotypes; and it becomes exceedingly difficult to believe that education is also about the flowering of human possibilities — something beyond one’s caste, gender and religion. And even in this ugly/violent world, there are people who have tried to come out of the arrogance of their privileged positions. But then, in an environment of doubt and chronic suspicion, it is taken for granted that a ‘forward caste’ teacher is bound to be casteist; and a male professor can never escape the psychology of patriarchal violence. This is also some sort of hyper-reaction causing severe damage to the process of creating a culture of trust, reciprocity and dialogue. No meaningful education is possible amid this broken/distorted communication, and perpetual apprehension about one’s motives. This is something that worries me as a teacher.

Every act of suicide reveals our collective failure. Particularly when we fail to prevent a young learner like Fathima from playing with death, as students, teachers and concerned citizens, we all ought to contemplate, and, instead of indulging in sensational politics, try to create a humane/stress-free/inclusive culture of learning that values the uniqueness of every student, and generates warmth and tenderness in interpersonal relationships. This effort would be the most meaningful tribute to Fathima.

# Nigana legacy with politicians now

Raj Kadyan

HUMAN brain is unique. It stores many old memories. Ostensibly forgotten, these re-emerge from the sleep mode and get refreshed off and on. I spent my childhood in a village in what is now Haryana. It was a large village of nearly 2,000 houses. Most dwelling units were made of mud bricks, with roof of thatch and mud. Every year after monsoon, women would put a refurbishing layer of a mix of dung and mud on the walls. Husk was also added to give the coating better durability. Though the village now has cemented houses, that dung smell of post-monsoon streets comes back whenever I visit.

Law and order was a recurring problem, making the *daroga* a frequent visitor. On more serious occasions, the SP would come. He was called a *poorice kaptaan*, as in the British times an SP was equated with an Army Captain. The term is still used by the elderly.

Theft was common. Since people did not have much cash, stealing was mostly of food grain or cattle. The thieves would strike at night, dig out a big hole in the wall, or the roof, and decamp with sacks full of grain. About 10 km away was the village of Nigana. It was inhabited by those who were converted to Islam in Mughal era. They were referred to as Ranghads in local parlance.

Nigana was notorious for stealing cattle. If a missing bullock or a buf-

falo was to be searched for, Nigana was the place. Victims approached village elders, who would condescendingly tell them that their *londey* might have done it and they would try to find out. They would then advise the victims to return after two days. On the second visit, Nigana elders would confirm that the cattle in question was/were indeed ‘brought’ by their *londey*, adding that the latter were demanding *phirauti* for their release. *Phirauti*, ransom for the release of stolen property, varied, and was the highest for milch cattle. The owner already knew the norm and would have carried the money. After negotiation, the amount was settled and the cattle were restored to the owner.

It was a smooth operation without violence, or even visible rancour.

Cattle were stolen during the night, early enough so that the thieves could re-enter the *seem* (boundary) of their village at darkness. As a precautionary measure, our village started collecting the cattle head in a central place or *gher*, and put guards at night armed with sturdy bamboo sticks. For further security, these pens were frequently changed. Those that did not send their cattle to the *gher* remained vulnerable to theft and had to dish out *phirauti*.

The Ranghads migrated to Pakistan en masse in 1947. My village no longer maintains or needs the *gher*. But this concept has been adopted by the political parties.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Rlys must end charity

Refer to ‘7th pay panel burden hit Railways hard’ (December 5); the statement of the Railways Minister in the Lok Sabha earlier this week is not as per stated norms of governance. Indian Railways is not the personal fiefdom of an individual or a party. It is also neither a charitable trust. The minister further put the operational loss on social obligations and new infrastructure, which anyway were planned and budgeted. The services provided by the institution are for the citizens of the country, who need to pay for what they use. The Railways cannot subsidise forever. Stations, as also the track, have become public toilets and garbage bins. The effort to upgrade the Chandigarh railway station is commendable. Does anyone complain about extra charges for services at an airport? And the results are before us. Airports are spic and span. Why can’t our railway stations look like that? Services come at a cost. The Railways has been doing social service, and now the time has come to do public service, that also as public expects, and with public money, but not after incurring a loss.

RAJIV BOOLCHAND JAIN, ZIRAKPUR

#### Counsel jawans

It is very important to pay heed to emotional wellbeing, for the age we

live in is full of ‘trigger’ situations (‘Fratricide: 6 ITBP jawans dead’; December 5). Regular counselling sessions with psychological experts in organisations (workplace as well as educational) can make a healthy difference and will help avoid the distressing loss of precious lives.

KRIKITA CHATTERJEE, ZIRAKPUR

#### Assess state of mind

Apropos ‘Fratricide: 6 ITBP jawans dead’ (December 5), it is now happening frequently in our armed forces and points at the mental state of the men in uniform. Such a state of mind also puts a question mark on their performance in the line of duty. It calls for adherence to stricter medical procedures, especially psychological tests.

RS KISHTWARIA, PALAMPUR

#### Overhaul education

Reference to ‘Haryana, recruit teachers’ (December 4); I submit a few suggestions: (1) principals and BEOs should be empowered to fill vacancies on ad-hoc basis against notified rules; (2) special recruitment departmental committees should be formed after taking away the recruitment powers from the commission/board; (3) schools, according to their management and nomenclature, should be divided into

zones with coordinating powers at the state headquarters; (4) transfer of teachers should be bare minimum; (5) local management of schools should be handed over to panchayats/MCs as directed in Constitution Amendments 73 and 74, effective 1993. The government should aim at ‘zero-vacancy schools’.

S KUMAR, PANCHKULA

#### Nab hoarders

The prices of vegetables, pulses and other household items have increased manifold in a very short period. The sharp increase in onion prices has made it difficult for the common man to eat even chapati with onion chutney. This hefty increase in prices of essential commodities is due to low production. The wholesaler reduces the supply to gain more profit by hoarding. But the government is doing nothing to reduce the inflated prices. It is vital to increase the production of vegetables and nab those involved in the black marketing and hoarding of onion and other items of daily use.

KAMALJEET MALWA, PATIALA

#### Parali ropes

Paddy was never crushed with yoked bulls. It was separated from the plant by hitting bundles against a hard platform (middle ‘When par-

ali wasn’t a dreaded word’; December 4). *Bhoosa* is wheat chaff, not *parali*. *Parali* was largely used for making disposable ropes and spread on kutchha floors as mattress.

SM AWASTHI, BY MAIL

#### Forget Hyperloop

Instead of taking care of the ailing economy, the Punjab Government is wasting time, energy and resources on unnecessary ventures (‘Punjab mulling Hyperloop link’; December 3). The government should stop day-dreaming and take practical steps to bring economy back on track. The previous SAD-BJP government had also tried the magnetic pod project in Amritsar, but failed.

NARESH JOHAR, AMRITSAR

#### Why give phones?

The Punjab Government’s decision to distribute 1.6 lakh smartphones among students won’t fulfil the fundamental needs of our younger generation. If quality education is imparted, they will have much more than smartphones in their future. In 2018, the French government passed a law banning cellphones in schools whereas we feel proud in distributing smartphones among toppers. Education, employment and hearth are more important.

SURESH NAGAL, TOHANA



# Public debate should shape key policies



THE Indian economy is passing through troubled times with a falling growth rate and historically high levels of unemployment. Hence, it is urgently necessary to find the right mix of policy to combat the current negative trends and get back to the high growth path.

Since solutions to overarching national economic issues are seldom taken straight out of textbooks, it is critical to have an ongoing public debate which yields the contours of a workable policy. For this, a free and open environment is needed in which people do not hesitate to come out with opinions which can run contrary to the received official wisdom of the day.

This was recently stressed by Raghuram Rajan, former governor of Reserve Bank of India, whose departure a bit too soon pointed to an atmosphere in which advice was not sought out. He held that suppressing criticism was a 'sure-fire recipe' for policy mistakes. "If every critic gets a phone call from a government functionary asking them to back off, or gets targeted by the ruling party's troll army, many will tone down their criticism." "Governments

that suppress public criticism do themselves a gross disservice."

Criticism allows public course correction to policy and gives government bureaucrats the room to speak the truth to their political masters. "No community has a monopoly on ideas, and an attempt to impose a uniform majoritarian culture on everyone can kill minority community characteristics that can be very disadvantageous to growth and development," said Rajan. Since growth is under stress, is there an atmosphere in which the government is getting the right advice?

Barely a month after Rajan's observations, Subramanian Swamy, the bete noire of all those in power, irrespective of whether he is on their side or not, said, "Unemployment will supersede every other thing, including the Ram mandir. But Modi does not listen. He listens to people who do not tell him the truth....He doesn't want any minister to talk back to him, let alone in public, but in private cabinet meetings too."

The problem with Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, adds Swamy, is that "she does not know any economics." The problem with the country today is 'poor demand'. "Supply is not the problem." Corporate taxes have been relaxed, enabling corporates to write off their debts. "You should abolish income tax instead so people can go out and spend. People cannot buy biscuits. Go and speak to Britannia."

The current economic reality is causing people, who were quiet till now, to speak up. The corporate sector, in fact, the entire business class, solidly backed



**VITAL:** Criticism allows course correction to policy and gives bureaucrats the room to speak the truth to their political masters.

A policy to get out of the present economic slowdown will best emerge from public debate. Such a policy will have the greatest chance of being realistic and achievable rather than one that has been structured without public input.

this government when it came to power. The twin shocks of demonetisation and introduction of GST hit mainly the lower strata of business, including informal small businesses. But the corporate sector continued to look forward. The current slowdown, affecting the demand for cars, consumer durables and a lot more, is, however, beginning to tell.

Rahul Bajaj, known for his outspokenness, raised the issue of criticising the government at a function in the presence of the Union Home Minister, Finance Minister and Railway Minister. "During UPA-II, we could abuse anyone. You are doing good work, but if we want to openly criticise you, there is no confidence you will appreciate that. I

may be wrong but everyone feels that."

This view was endorsed by Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, head of Biocon, who said, "Hope the government reaches out to India Inc for working out solutions to revive consumption and growth. So far, we are all pariahs and the government does not want to hear any criticism of the economy."

If this went down poorly, what the Finance Minister had to state in response is revealing. "Home Minister Amit Shah answers on how issues raised by Bajaj were addressed. Questions/criticisms are heard and answered/addressed. Always a better way to seek an answer than spreading one's own impressions, which, on gain-

ing traction, can hurt national interest." This is a giveaway of sorts. If the national interest is invoked to respond to public criticism of economic policy then that tells its own tale.

The growth rate falling below 5 per cent in a global environment of deceleration is disappointing but not calamitous. One reason why this can have attracted strong criticism is the government's own policy of making much of a high growth rate to project a muscular image of the country.

A policy to get out of the present slowdown will best emerge from public debate. Such a policy will have the greatest chance of being realistic and achievable. To do otherwise, ie hand down a policy that has been structured sans public input, will be fraught.

The most well-known recent example of working out a major policy initiative without public input is demonetisation. Any number of experts would have pointed out that the move will likely not work as did not the attempt to demonetise high denomination currency notes during the Janata Dal rule under the leadership of Morarji Desai. One reason why Rajan fell out of grace is speculated to be his advice against this move, which was willed by none other than Narendra Modi.

The economic failure of communist regimes is attributed in part to their being closed societies in which the party knew what was good for everybody. The party, thereby, scripted its own demise. Democratic India can and has till now done much better by being an open society. And so it must remain.

# Why viral rape-consciousness is not enough



After the Nirbhaya episode of December 2012, society has taken to echoing a multidimensional anger against sex crimes by enacting new laws and prescribing ultimate punishments. However, the same society has continued its tolerance towards other serious gender crimes. The two, almost universal ones, being denial of parental assets to daughters and infliction of domestic violence on wives.

THE rape gangs at the Hyderabad toll plaza and Ranchi's VIP zone comprised regular youths, from regular Indian families. So regular that, amidst the resultant outrage, one of the Hyderabad rapists' mother was quoted as saying that he should be punished by burning him alive in the same way as the victim. What serious risk the patriarchy has in store for the female and male child alike in society is not to be missed from the casualness with which the young offenders indulged in these gang rapes. The depravity let loose set the lowest possible standards for any type of society; the displayed impunity underlined that an average Indian male will always be at the risk of being patriarchally groomed as a potential sex offender.

The national consciousness on rape owes its present virulent profile largely to Nirbhaya episode of December 2012, after which the victims of gruesome sexual assault came to be referred as survivors. Society has since taken to echoing a multidimensional anger against sex crimes by enacting new laws and prescribing ultimate punishments. However, the same society has continued its tolerance towards other serious gender crimes. The two, almost universal ones, being denial of parental assets to daughters and infliction of domestic violence on wives.

With almost nil opportunities of individual rehabilitation from a gendered existence, a remedy lost in the cumulative aftermath of rape-consciousness, the commissions, the speedy trials, the capital punishments, the one-stop centres etc, have proved to be a recipe serving the taste, sentiment and cause of patriarchy, often bowing down to a straightforward



**ASSERTIVENESS:** The domain of violence against women is witnessing a tussle.

equation that the society has too big a stake in patriarchy. The sex crimes are opposed most vociferously in an ideal space because they challenge a vital notion of patriarchy, of being the traditional protector of women. When it comes to those gender crimes which are at the root of this scenario, there reigns a shared silence because this genre strengthens the status of patriarchy in the real world.

What women experience in even supposedly friendly or neutral surroundings — family, community, police, women's commission, government, judiciary, legislature, political party, religious organisation, media house — who all seem only too willing to overtime facilitating women's safety, however, essentially retaining their patriarchal character, is a male mindset again and again. Various gender budgeting exercises, even when flow of cash is guaranteed, are a dead giveaway. Madhya Pradesh's Ladli Scheme, which is now touching an

annual expenditure of Rs 700-800 crore, has been reduced into a dowry for marriage exercise and GOI's enormous Nirbhaya fund-linked one-stop crisis centres are serving more as a PR exercise than an empowering protocol for women in distress. The Delhi Government's latest free bus travel facilities to women, coupled with the presence of dedicated marshals, aimed to increase women's footfall in public transport, will add to their sense of security but are no substitute to a shared sense of gender equality.

Let me share excerpts from my reflections, 'Why will sexual violence not stop', immediately on acceptance of the Verma Commission's report in2013: There are inbuilt factors why sexual assaults on women will continue. Notwithstanding prompt arrests and convictions of the culprits; notwithstanding outbursts of massive social energy against such crimes; notwithstanding high-voltage media coverage and parliamentary outrage;

and in spite of the Justice Verma Committee legislation, the ever-lurking fear of such assaults will not dissipate.

The first factor is the near exclusion of gender crimes, which are at the root of sexual crimes, from the penal resolve. The application of gender justice is alien to Indian jurisprudence.

The second is the huge gap between sex explosion and sex education.

The third and fourth factors present the two sides of the age-old patriarchy prescription — a masculine remedy regime abutting the violence domain, and a gender-insensitive workforce in the criminal justice system.

The fifth is the typically dominant gender conditioning of the Indian male.

The masculine upgrade of the Criminal Justice System (CJS), enhancing penal authority, personnel accountability and police presence skill sets, has only complemented the traditional notion of sexual purity. There is a parallel stream of cosmetic remedies as well, the likes of women police stations and PCRs, *kanyadan* schemes, women banks and post-offices, all women schools and transports etc which encourage a sense of isolation and dependence among women. They do not address the issues of informed awareness.

It is no aberration, in view of the deeprooted gender inequality, that a majority of the sexual assaults are committed by people enjoying a trust relationship with their victims — the Asarams, guardians, relatives, caretakers, benefactors, boyfriends, teachers, coaches, doctors, guides, neighbours, politicians, policemen, custodians, confidants. What enables them is the gender vulnerability of the victim, which conditions her to remain 'silent' in matters pertaining to sexual activi-

ties. Her muted nurture hardly leaves the victim with escape routes, making it even harder for the state to stitch any preventive protocol. It is also no aberration that a sex offender carries no distinct profile. Empirically speaking, a female could be as much unsafe in the company of a familiar face as with a stranger.

The VAW (Violence Against Women) domain is already witnessing a tussle. There are so many gangrapes these days because a lone stranger dare not attack a relatively aware female. How come the acquaintances, relatives, spiritual gurus are being frequently reported against and even the treacheries in relationship are being called rapes? Clearly, the society is tilting unflinchingly as the legal protocols come under intense scrutiny. The horrific sexual attacks are also a measure of the victim's determined resistance, which ridicules the male ego no end. The acid attacks and 'honour' killings are indicative of the female's resolve not to be cowed down into imposed marital alliance. Yet another female assertion reflects in the trickling claims made by daughters on parental assets.

The community is trapped as it craves for a fitting retribution in rape cases. Nevertheless, it is also in dire need of a participative release from fear psychosis. The polity is trapped too. The crux is that the security standards based on patriarchy and the legal initiatives drawing from state power have proved inadequate. The point to remember is that where legal and moral protocols have made little difference, empowering protocols will. A shift of this magnitude, however, is bound to generate inescapable emotional pain and physical hardships for both genders. So be it!

QUICK CROSSWORD

**ACROSS**

1 Pinnacle (6)

4 Resist (6)

9 A large smooth rock (7)

10 Sum (5)

11 Up to the time of (5)

12 A Chinese game (7)

13 Suffer disaster (4,2,5)

18 Best (7)

20 An adhesive (5)

22 Gather bit by bit (5)

23 Uncommitted (7)

24 Zestful enjoyment (6)

25 Simply (6)

**DOWN**

1 Conquer (6)

2 A saddle horse (5)

3 Gratify (7)

5 Roof's degree of slope (5)

6 Result (7)

7 High praise (6)

8 Mood (5,2,4)

14 Ingredient of porridge (7)

15 Ecstasy (7)

16 Puma (6)

17 In fact (6)

19 Deprived of (5)

21 To well up (5)

**YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION**

**Across:** 1 Awkward, 5 Paper, 8 At one's wits end, 9 Solve, 10 Lineage, 11 Modest, 12 Series, 15 Tremble, 17 Avail, 19 Sabre-rattling, 20 Emend, 21 Decency.

**Down:** 1 Amass, 2 Knowledgeable, 3 Ageless, 4 Dawdle, 5 Put on, 6 Prevarication, 7 Redress, 11 Matisse, 13 Elastic, 14 Reward, 16 Blend, 18 Leggy.

SU DO KU

	3		5	7	4	
1		9		7		6
	6	5		2	3	
5		1	9		2	
9			8	5		7
	7		2		8	5
		4	2		1	3
3		8		6		2
	9		3	8		6

V. EASY

CALENDAR

DECEMBER 6, 2019, FRIDAY

- Vikrami Samvat 2076
- Shaka Samvat 1941
- Margshirsh Shaka 15
- Margshirsh Parvishte 21
- Hijari 1441
- Shukla Paksha Tithi 10, up to 6.35 am
- Sidhi Yoga up to 4.30 pm
- Uttarabhadrapad Nakshatra up to 10.57 pm
- Moon in Pisces sign
- Gandmool start 10.57 pm

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

5	1	3	8	4	6	9	2	7
6	7	4	3	2	9	1	5	8
2	8	9	7	1	5	4	6	3
1	5	2	9	6	7	3	8	4
4	6	7	1	3	8	5	9	2
9	3	8	2	5	4	7	1	6
8	9	5	4	7	2	6	3	1
3	4	6	5	8	1	2	7	9
7	2	1	6	9	3	8	4	5

FORECAST

SUNSET: 17:21 HRS

SUNRISE: 07:07 HRS

FRIDAY SATURDAY

Sunny Partly Cloudy Cloudy Rainy Foggy

CITY	MAX	MIN
Chandigarh	22	09
New Delhi	23	07
Amritsar	22	05
Bathinda	25	07
Jalandhar	22	05
Ludhiana	22	05
Bhiwani	23	08
Hisar	23	08
Sirsa	24	08
Dharamsala	16	07
Manali	14	00
Shimla	17	06
Srinagar	11	-03
Jammu	23	08
Kargil	-07	-14
Leh	02	-15
Dehradun	25	09
Mussoorie	18	07

TEMPERATURE IN °C

epaper.tribuneindia.com



# Ahankar-mukt leadership

Just watch political leaders across the world – the debilitating effects of power are so visible



## THE WISE LEADER

R GOPALAKRISHNAN

This year-end I write about the importance of ahankar-mukt leadership. Early next year, I will share how to work at becoming *ahankar-mukt*. Narcissists are full of *ahankar*. I have been advocating that board directors must act on negative signals they pick up. I have written a book about power-induced temporary brain damage among business leaders--to be fair, the comment applies equally to national leaders (*CRASH: Lessons from the entry and exit of CEOs*). Just watch political leaders in China, Turkey, America and the BRICS

nations, and the debilitating effects of power are so visible. ADB/World Bank reports that Nepal, Bangladesh, Indonesia and Vietnam have grown faster than India in recent quarters. Without doubt India faces a growth issue, which must be admitted sensitively before leaders can do something. In civic life, neo-nationalism lurks in many countries. Each country must solve such a problem in line with its culture. History shows what has happened in several countries. ■ A long-ruling party progressively becomes ineffective, indolent and corrupt. The affairs of the nation start to drift. The right wingers present themselves as being clear-headed, firm and possessing a no-nonsense approach. ■ The ruling party is depicted by emerging right wingers as having taken wrong and anti-national political decisions over their long years in power. Parliament is deliberately weakened. The government's firm action attracts political controversy. ■ The right-wing party quells criticism, blames the past for every woe and repeatedly shames an 'enemy', whom they have identified. The right-wing

party gradually gains totalitarian control instead of 'total control' with consequences which evolve over time. Just last week, an opposition leader in Peru, Keiko Fujimori, was released after 12 months in jail. She had been charged for illicit campaign money from Brazil, but the charges failed to stick. Noted journalist Swaminathan Aiyar has commented, "Businessmen are terrified of raids by tax authorities... BJP has raided or acted against opponents like P Chidambaram and Sharad Pawar... BJP had launched nine corruption cases against Ajit Pawar... these magically disappeared when Ajit offered his hand..." (in the recent Maharashtra shenanigans). Former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh said that business leaders are scared but saffron supporters argue that the statement is political. Former speaker and BJP leader, Sumitra Mahajan, has reportedly stated that she used Congressmen to express disagreements for fear of retribution. BJP leader Subramanian Swamy wrote in his book, *Reset*, "...lettered but timid economists... tell the prime minister what he wants to hear... This is a

frightening potpourri for the nation." An extract from former Sebi chairman M Damodaran's December newsletter summarises the views of a corporate governance meet as: "...the time has come, in the interest of all stakeholders, to move from a situation of distrust and terror to trust and verify." Veteran Rahul Bajaj delivered a message, provoking a minister to retort that his expression was not "in the national interest". Kiran Mazumdar Shaw argues that the government treats business as pariahs. In the chambers of commerce, leaders drop their voices as they state their "real and strictly private views" in hushed tones. Leaders should reflect on these views. Followers judge reality by the actions of the leader, not the profanities of the leader. Recall the experience of Pehr Gyllenhammar, chairman of Volvo from 1970-1994, or Thomas Middelhoff of Bertelsmann a few years ago, or Carlos Ghosn of Renault Nissan more recently. A fifteenth century Banarasi sage, Sant Kabir Das said, "sees utaarai haathai kari, so paisey ghara mahim", which means the one who gives up

# Unclogging the liquidity flow

While easing procedures against arbitration awards helps, more needs to be done to boost infra



## INFRA TALK

VINAYAK CHATTERJEE

It is often the under-reported news that has the potential for a favourable long term impact. On November 20, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) approved a measure that would provide some relief to the infrastructure sector — a move that has gone little noticed outside the sector. The CCEA eased the process for government entities such as the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to immediately clear up to 75 per cent of the amount locked up in arbitration disputes in favour of the private sector, even if the government entity had appealed against such awards. While NITI Aayog had issued directions to do this way back in 2016, the implementation left much to be desired. The effective constraint was the insistence by the concerned gov-

ernment institutions to ask for bank guarantees for this base 75 per cent and then even to cover potential interest (should the courts decide otherwise) before releasing the amount. The recent CCEA decision has asked institutions not to, (at least) insist on guarantees for the interest component of the amount under dispute. The deep liquidity crunch in the private sector made it anyway extremely difficult to secure such guarantees. More liquidity was needed to chase scarce liquidity. It is hoped that the process may further be eased in future to a system that does away with bank guarantees altogether, considering the challenges of securing any bank guarantees by infrastructure players nowadays. To encourage banks to extend guarantees and give comfort to government entities to clear dues, the Confederation of Indian Industry's (CII) Infrastructure Council had asked the government to consider extending a separate "Buyer's Line of Credit" to banks which could be used by government agencies to clear payments under arbitral awards to vendors, which in turn, could be used by them to pay back loans to banks. The CCEA decision now moves the needle from merely a directive from NITI Aayog to a decision of the Union cabinet that needs to be strictly complied with. It recognises that government, as the largest purchases of goods



and services, is itself a prime contributor to the liquidity crunch; and delayed payments often lead through a series of domino effects to ultimate bankruptcy for private firms that depend largely on government orders. It is estimated that over ₹1 trillion of funds is due from government departments and public sector units to vendors and suppliers in the form of "won" arbitration awards. Equally importantly, the CCEA in its meeting also said that government entities should take the opinion of a law officer of the central government (for example, the Attorney General or Solicitor General) before appealing arbitral awards. This straightaway reduces the hitherto mechanical response of a statal entity to push any lost award to the court system. This one step would lead, hopefully, to a huge reduction in appeals to courts.

Incidentally, the Arbitration Act itself recognises the extent of the problem. Changes made to it in 2015, sought to deter challenges to arbitration awards and to speed up the process of clearing payments from such awards. However, amendments earlier this year effectively nullified such improvements only to dis-rupt after 2015. It is these recent amendments which the Supreme Court struck down on November 27 — providing another big relief for the sector. Release of arbitration awards is one part of the story. The larger canvas of cash-flow difficulties relates to securing timely payments from government generally, even for regular invoices. As all infrastructure analysts will testify, each passing month now sees the number of days of outstandings on private sector balance sheets increase at a worrying rate. A large reason for this is the

ego by chopping off his head is the one who can lead. Psychoanalyst Michael Maccoby wrote a fine article in the HBR in 2000 about narcissistic leaders, referring to Sigmund Freud's typology, technically termed erotic, obsessive and narcissistic, though I prefer types 1, 2 and 3. Type 1 comprises those who desperately want people to love them, like godmen. Type 2 are inner-directed ones who follow rules and instructions and communicate well, like bureaucrats. Type 3 are independent people and not easily impressed. Type 3 want to be admired, not loved and want to leave a legacy. If they don't get adulatory response from their followers, they become shrill and insistent, like Ms Indira Gandhi around the Emergency or Ross Perot, the business tycoon who ran for the US Presidency in 1992 and 1996. Type 3 leaders' characteristics are known from studies in psychology. They are sensitive to criticism, they are poor listeners, they lack empathy, they border on grandiosity and distrust of others and they are ruthless in their pursuit of victory. *Ahankar-mukt* leadership is tough, but essential. Happy 2020.

*The writer is an author and corporate advisor. He is distinguished professor of IIT Kharagpur. He was a director of Tata Sons and a vice-chairman of Hindustan Unilever. Email: rgopal@themindworks.me*

## CHINESE WHISPERS

### Anti-mobile rules



Peeved at the way mobiles were getting in the way of important meetings, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Adityanath in June this year prohibited his ministers from carrying them to cabinet meetings. However, during a recent cabinet meeting, a senior bureaucrat who was present was spotted talking on his mobile. This caused some flutter and lawmakers questioned the chief minister on why bureaucrats were exempt from a rule that was mandatory for ministers. An infuriated Adityanath immediately ordered that henceforth even bureaucrats would have to comply with the no-mobile phone diktat.

### Remembering Amma

Politicians in Tamil Nadu, with some exceptions, wear their signature white shirt and white mundu (a kind of *dhoti*) in public appearances. However, key leaders of the All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK), including party co-coordinator and Chief Minister Edappadi K Palaniswami and Deputy Chief Minister O Panneerselvam, attended office on Thursday wearing black. Thursday was the third death anniversary of former chief minister and AIADMK supremo, the late J Jayalalithaa. Some women leaders were seen wearing black sarees during a silent march to the burial ground of their former leader at Marina Beach. Twitter pages of the leaders also turned black with the picture of Amma (as Jayalalithaa was called by her party men) and condolence messages.

### The slowdown 'myth'

Virendra Singh "Mast", a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Lok Sabha MP, on Thursday disputed the Opposition's attacks on the government over economic slowdown, particularly the criticism about declining sales in the automobile sector. The MP from Balia, Uttar Pradesh, said in the House such statements were being made to "defame" the country. He said there were many households that had multiple cars and there were traffic hold-ups. Participating in a discussion on damage to crops in recent months, the MP said: "To defame the nation and the government people are saying that the automobile sector has slowed. If there is a decline in automobile sales, why are there traffic jams?" The MP, who heads the BJP's Kisan Morcha, promised to provide onions at ₹25 per kg from his constituency to all MPs. Singh said good-quality onions were produced in Muhammadabad town in his constituency.

## INSIGHT

# Time to tango

A collaborative mindset similar to that of Japan could take India into a completely different orbit in the global digital ecosystem



SUJIT KUMAR

The current state of the telecom industry begs a robust reframing of the problem. Instead of "what could/should be done to restore the health of the telecom industry?", perhaps the reframed challenge could be "in what ways could India's constantly evolving digital communication infrastructure and digital service ecosystem become commercially sustainable, socially relevant and remain future ready?". Communication technology is known to transition from one generation to another with an uncanny periodicity on the global stage. 3G in 2001 in Japan. 4G LTE in Sweden and Norway in 2009. 5G in Korea in 2019. Of immense significance is the dramatic change in the business context itself after 2007 when, for the very first time, computing power and intelligence moved away from the baseband of the telco infrastructure to the chipset of the smartphone, with iPhone leading the way. IP-based communication had arrived. The resulting over-the-top (OTT) ecosystem gradually started eroding the telco's traditional revenue stream of voice, messaging, and media, forcing it to either become a provider

of commodity bandwidth or reimagine itself as a digital service provider, thus injecting unknown variables into the investment decision of the telco. The telecom policy framework in India, unfortunately, failed to recognise this seismic shift in balance of power and continued to treat the industry as the golden goose. In the Indian context, it was this deep insight that led to Mukesh Ambani's strategic business call around 2007. A successful implementation of his business plan would not only make Jio, the insurgent, the numero uno in the telecom industry but also pitchfork Reliance into the sunrise digital service industry from the sunset petroleum-based business started by the late Dhirubhai Ambani. So, when the world had already moved on to 4G/4GLTE, incremental thinking based auction of 3G spectrum led to the incumbent telcos acquiring the same at sky high rates, assuming business as usual scenario. In hindsight, it was hara kiri. While difficult to decode then, Ambani's decision to skip a generation and gamble on 4G LTE was a masterstroke which enabled digital services at a far lower cost. Less understood is the fact that it was also an adventurous move, considering that it would ultimately take in a few lakh crores and that there was hardly anyone in the country at that time who had prior experience in rolling out an IP network. While executing, he also took a leaf out of China Mobile's experience and bridged the technology and digital service ecosystem gap which the incumbents were happy to let the underserved masses live with, a clear sign of incumbents having forsaken promoter's mentality which had guided their journey since the mid-nineties.

The stakes were very high. In many ways, Ambani did an encore of what Mittal admirably did as an insurgent to the incumbent BSNL/MTNL while launching Airtel. Unfortunately, such upheavals come at a price. The red ink on the telco balance sheets speaks for itself. Once again, while the world is moving ahead with 5G, we are beginning to dither and ask the very same questions which were asked about 4G LTE in 2010. What is it that 5G can do with its significantly higher speed and near zero latency which 4G LTE cannot? Without getting into technical complexities, suffice to say that 5G can go a long way towards enhancing enterprise efficiencies, competitiveness and user satisfaction through connected machines/devices and vastly more efficient modes of communication including holographic projections, AR/VR etc. Starting with the underserved urban and moving on to the semi urban/rural hinterland, it could address quality and access issues in the areas of education, skill development and healthcare. Once again, media and entertainment could find user adoption early on and provide the much needed revenue stream. A smart energy system could add substantial value. Without 5G, smart cities would not be smart enough. Naturally, interested players would execute pilots and learn from international experiences before investing sizable sums. Applications of AI/ML/Cloud will also get a serious leg up. Could there be other consequences of lagging behind in the gradual deployment of 5G? The next generation technology, 6G, is based on a constellation of low earth orbit satellites which would plug into the country-specific 5G infras-

tructure. Expected to roll out by 2030, only a few players would own a 6G global network: the 3 consortiums are currently led by Softbank, Amazon and Tesla. More than geographical boundaries will get blurred as time goes by. The key elements of the way forward could be: ■ India's National Digital Communication Policy should recognise that the risks associated with keeping India on par with the world in terms of its digital communication infrastructure and hence the digital service ecosystem cannot be borne only by the telcos. It should be distributed across key stakeholders. This perspective could help resolve the current tangle as well. ■ Given the uncertainties associated with 5G use cases and business models, aggravated further by the socio-economic complexities of our country, spectrum pricing should be viewed with a lens other than just "global price discovery"? The concept of revenue share needs further fine-tuning to enable telcos to compete with global digital natives. ■ Potential 5G application areas need to be developed on a priority basis and converted into business models. Perhaps policy, developed jointly with industry, could articulate anchor tenants so as to get the ball rolling. ■ The business opportunity, seen over a 10-year time-frame, is far too humungous for a few players to want to straddle it. Specialisation would enable speed and excellence. Policy needs to play a role here. ■ Valuable lessons are to be learnt from the collaborative efforts of Japanese government and companies in their ongoing efforts to re-occupy global centre stage in the digital ecosystem after having lost primacy in the electronics hardware business. A similar collaborative mindset could take India into a much deserved orbit in the global digital ecosystem. We are in uncharted territory with serious financial, societal and security implications. And time is running out.

*The author is visiting/adjunct faculty, IIM Ahmedabad & Bangalore. Views are personal*

## LETTERS

### Politically correct

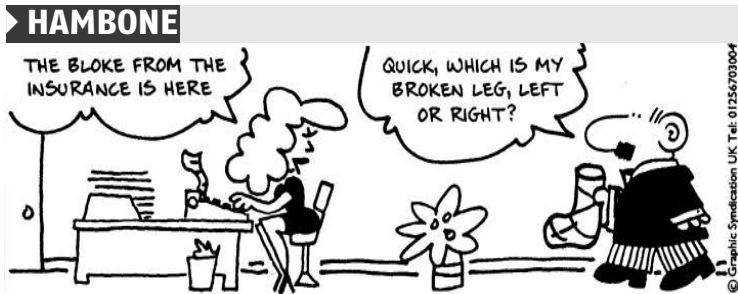
This refers to Shyamal Majumdar's column "India Inc has never spoken up" (December 5). He has rightly and realistically proposed that the corporate honchos in India have always followed the policy that discretion is the better part of valour. It would be wrong to infer business leaders' intentions from what they say or do. Whether it is the high donations or the praise for the government, the actions relates to the party in power, irrespective of the business leaders' political beliefs. The odd thing that one notices now is that some business leaders have commented on issues like lynching or secularism but taken care not to mention the name of the party. However, Rahul Bajaj is an exception. But it was not just a coincidence that his son was there to defend the government. If the UPA government invoked fight against communalism to seek approval, now it is national interest. The finance minister has specialised in this now — and as defence minister earlier — but it is a sign of political immaturity. **Y G Chouksey** Pune

### Business versus politics

This refers to "Mr Bajaj does BJP a good turn" by A K Bhattacharya (December 4). Rahul Bajaj has inadvertently done a temporary electoral favour to the Bharatiya Janata Party

by speaking out. This is mainly because he has not given any constructive suggestion while expressing his fears. One wonders why many other business leaders hardly seem to be offering any inputs to the government, leave aside criticism of its economic policies. The fact remains that mistrust of business houses, complexity of taxation laws and processes, too many compliances and excessive regulatory requirements coupled with heavy penalties for offences that might be only technical in nature have led to a widespread feeling of fear among businessmen. The result is that the purpose of business has gradually shifted from "growth and progress" to "safety and security". This has naturally affected government's overall revenue generation. The process of governance and the formulation of major policies require a collection of honest feedback and inputs from operating agencies and specialists, not just from yes men. Business houses are the main operating agencies for a nation. The challenge for the government is how to separate politics from economics in governance without losing out on public support. **Vinay Kant Kapur** New Delhi

Letters can be mailed, faxed or e-mailed to: The Editor, Business Standard Nehru House, 4 Bahadur Shah Zafar Marg New Delhi 110 002 Fax: (011) 23720201 E-mail: letters@bsmail.in All letters must have a postal address and telephone number





## Inflation warrior

RBI's next move will depend on the Budget

The monetary policy committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) surprised financial markets with its unanimous decision to not cut the policy repo rate on Thursday. Although economic growth has slowed sharply in recent quarters, which raised the expectation of another rate cut, the rate-setting committee had strong reasons to pause. As argued by this newspaper before, the only reason in favour of another rate cut was that a status quo policy could possibly unnerve the financial market. The yield on the 10-year government bond went up by 14 basis points.

It is true that the pace of economic expansion has slowed significantly over the last few quarters. Also, it can be argued that for a major economy, India appears far too worried about inflation targets, especially when other central banks are questioning their effectiveness. But the RBI has made its intention very clear: It wants to remain an inflation-warrior. The central bank has revised its inflation forecast upwards to 5.1-4.7 per cent for the second half of the current fiscal year. Although headline inflation is being largely driven by food prices and the central bank expects it to come down in the first half of the next financial year, it has taken a call to wait for more clarity. The sharp rise in household inflation expectations indicates the risk of ignoring inflationary pressures. Besides, food inflation is difficult to predict. One of the reasons why the central bank overestimated inflation in recent years was the difficulty in predicting food inflation. It would certainly want to avoid policy mistakes at a time when food prices are rising. Further, while RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das avoided questions on real interest rates in his post-policy media interaction, it is likely to have figured in the discussion of the MPC.

The MPC also rightly decided to wait for the Union Budget for more clarity on government policy. Again, though the central bank refrained from explicitly displaying its concern about the fiscal situation, the government's revenue position is certainly worrying, and the central bank would need to do its bit to maintain an appropriate balance between the fiscal and monetary policies. A cut in the policy rate, anyway, would not have had the desired impact because most investors do not expect the government to stick to the stated fiscal deficit target.

Finally, while part of the bond market has reacted to the reduction in policy rates in the current cycle, transmission in bank lending rates has been fairly slow. The MPC's decision to maintain the accommodative stance and ample liquidity in the system should help complete this process. A rate cut at this stage might have affected transmission because the market would have seen it as nearing the end of the easing cycle. The MPC has thus wisely chosen to preserve some policy firepower. Aside from inflation, the course of the monetary policy will depend on the Budget, which will be presented before the February meeting of the MPC. The government is in a difficult spot with mounting fiscal challenges. Sharp fiscal slippage in the current year, which is a real possibility, will constrain the MPC from further easing. Also, a pause at this stage shows that the MPC will use the available policy space judiciously.

## Protecting private data

Parliament must examine the Bill carefully

The Cabinet has cleared the Personal Data Protection Bill, which is due to be presented in Parliament in the current session. This is the first legislation that lays down concrete principles for protecting personal data. It is also the first codification of the fundamental right to privacy, affirmed by the Supreme Court in a 2017 judgment. It lays down the principles by which data would be judged “personal”, “sensitive” and “critical”, and mandates processes by which such data may be obtained with consent, stored, and processed. However, the Bill is not a comprehensive privacy law because it leaves many grey areas unaddressed, and may need extensive amendment or follow-up legislation before it offers adequate protection to citizens. It will thus need to be subjected to proper scrutiny by lawmakers before being cleared. The initial draft was prepared and presented in July last year by a committee headed by Justice B N Srikrishna. The delay has reportedly been caused by multiple amendments, and inter-ministerial consultations and the draft, which is to be presented to Parliament, is not in the public domain.

Moreover, the consultation process has been unusually opaque. The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has refused to make any of the comments received public, despite multiple right to information requests and questions in Parliament. This has led to controversy with Justice Srikrishna himself, among others, stating that comments should be released, now that the consultation process is over. The committee's draft mandated that sensitive personal data be stored and processed only in servers located in India. It also laid down procedures for obtaining consent with clear explanations as to the purpose when data is collected.

However, the Bill offers the state wide latitude to conduct surveillance, and to collect data without consent, for many purposes. It also permits processing personal data for prevention, detection, investigation, and prosecution, or any other contravention of law. This latitude effectively drives a truck through the Right to Privacy, given a lack of legal safeguards against surveillance, and the existence of mass surveillance infrastructure such as the Netra.

The draft that is supposed to be presented also reportedly allows the government the right to access all “non-personal” data, even if that data is collected by private organisations. The definition of non-personal data is broad: This could be data where names have been removed for “anonymisation”. There are many ways to “non-anonymise” such non-personal data, especially given the access to Aadhaar, bank records, and other sensitive information. It is possible that such “non-personal” data could be used unethically to target voters during elections, for instance. The draft also reportedly asks social media networks to set up systems for verifying users. This could lead to a sharp erosion of freedom of expression in India's social media space if it is used to target critics of government policy.

Despite all these gaps and flaws, the establishment of a first basic framework for personal data protection is important. In the absence of such legislation, it is easy for government arms and the private sector to indulge in overreach and collect data without consent, as indeed has occurred in the two years since the Supreme Court ruling. But lawmakers must examine the Bill with care, and raise appropriate concerns so that gaps in the legislation can be plugged.

## Bombay to Mumbai



### BOOK REVIEW

UTTARAN DAS GUPTA

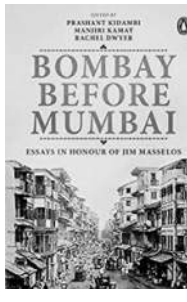
When Australian historian Jim Masselos arrived in Bombay (now Mumbai) for the first time in 1961 on a Commonwealth scholarship to study for his PhD in St Xavier's College, he was hardly any different from thousands of people who land at the airports, railways stations and beaches of the metropolis every day. “India and Southeast Asia became important locations on the world crossroads,” he writes in

“Remembering Bombay”, the final essay in the book under review, “we... (did not) see ourselves in Australia as positioned at the world's crossroads.” Dr Masselos writes he was unsure if he would like Bombay — a fear that has been belied by his illustrious carrier since then.

This book, dedicated to him and a product of a seminar organised by him in 2017, provides more evidence of the mutual affection between India's “Maximum City” and one of its foremost chroniclers. The 13 essays in the book — excluding Dr Masselo's Afterword and an Introduction by Prof Kidambi — are neatly arranged into four parts: (I) “Community”, (II) “Spatial Templates”, (III) “Power”, and (IV) “Nationalism”. The first part has four essays while the other three have three each, their subjects as varied as

how the 1871 famine in Iran affected the Parsi population in Mumbai to how home furnishings were marketed in the city in the 1930s and 1940s.

One of my favourite essays in the book is, in fact, “Selling Home: Marketing Home Furnishings in Late Colonial Bombay” by Abigail McGowan, associate professor of history at the University of Vermont, USA. Prof McGowan has previously researched the politics of craft and development. In her essay in this book, she writes: “Traders and contemporary



writers regularly described Bombay as a city where anything could be bought or sold.” There are, however, relatively few investigations into the material history of the lives of people living in the city — what did their homes look like, what cutlery and crockery did they use, what beds did they sleep in.

A helpful footnote informs the reader that Prof McGowan accessed the archives of the Godrej group, foremost manufacturers of furniture in India, as well as the

Scottish Business Archives at the University of Glasgow. She also provides 18 advertisements at the end of her essay — catalogues and promotion of furniture shops in the

city. As her essay demonstrates, the gradual disappearance of European furniture makers and their replacement by Indian alternatives is a narrative not only of the birth of a new nation but also its turn towards a socialist economy. In conclusion, Prof McGowan writes, “they sold goods for home, and sold the idea of home as well”. The home of the family is, in fact, the smallest unit of the economy and the nation, and it is undeniable that the microcosm of the home is the stage on which the drama of the nation plays out.

Several historical characters stand out in the book. One among them is Mohammad Ali Rogay, a late 18th-early 19th century trader who spent several years in China as an agent of the legendary Readymoney family and later associated with Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy. In the inaugural essay of the book, “Mohammad Ali Rogay: Life and Times of a Bombay Country Trader”, Murali Ranganathan traces the history

of community formation in early Bombay through the life and career of Rogay, who emerged as a leader of the Konkani Muslim community. Prof Ranganathan writes this is only a preliminary essay—one can only hope he will write a fuller account of this intriguing character.

In recent times, there has been a lively debate about the utility of popular and academic history, with both camps not infrequently locking horns. The writers and editors of this book — all of them reputed historians with impeccable credentials — seem to have tried to make the essay accessible to readers beyond academic circles. My only complaint is that the critical apparatus is in the endnotes — imagine turning 400 pages every time you want to look up something! As history becomes a contested space in “new” India, books such as these will perform the essential task of serving as reminders.

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



## DFIs: Look before you leap

Before setting up any new development bank, the govt must examine the contribution and performance of the existing ones

There is renewed interest in development financial institutions (DFIs), or development banks, globally. This is mainly attributed to the success of China's DFIs — initially in the domestic economy and later globally. Singapore and Brazil, too, have been cited by many as success stories for DFIs. In some developed countries, there is a growing interest in the idea in view of the moderation in their gross domestic product (GDP) growth.

In India, the appeal of DFIs is growing, but this is mainly driven by the stress in the banking sector as well as the non-banking financial companies, mainly due to their exposure to infrastructure financing and housing finance. In this regard, there is also a reference to the folly of abandoning DFIs as part of the reforms since 1990s. The Reserve Bank of India had circulated a discussion paper on wholesale bank in 2018, but it has since abandoned the idea. But the idea of a new DFI has recently been officially embraced.

On August 23, among the measures announced to revive economic growth by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is a proposal to establish a new DFI. Ms Sitharaman said, “In order to improve access to long-term finance, it is proposed to establish an organisation to provide credit enhancement for infrastructure and housing projects, particularly in the context of India now not having a development bank and also for the need for us to have an institutional mechanism. So, this will enhance debt flow toward such projects.”

### Access to finance

The proposal to improve access to long-term finance assumes that savings are available to be accessed. At a macro level, a predominant part (over 90 per cent) of savings to finance investments in India comes from

domestic sources. The household financial savings as a percentage of GDP have been falling in recent years. The revenue deficit of both the central and state governments have been increasing, contributing negatively to savings. So, how much of the problem is availability of finance and how much is access?

No doubt, foreign savings could help finance infrastructure but the aggregate of foreign savings in the economy has to be consistent with sustainable current account deficit, which is around 2 per cent of GDP. Further, if infrastructure projects are funded with foreign currency, they have to assume exchange rate risk, which in turn impacts viability.

Ideally, long-term contractual savings should finance infrastructure projects since they have long gestation and long life. However, the long-term contractual savings in India are a very small proportion of household savings because the informal sector dominates.

It can be argued that maturity transformation is one of the functions of financial intermediation and, therefore, the paucity of contractual savings should not by itself be considered a serious constraint. This is true. However, the scope and limits to credit enhancement in our context are relevant.

A distinction has to be made between access to finance for infrastructure projects and availability of commercially viable infrastructure projects in an atmosphere of legal, administrative and policy uncertainties, and weak enforcement of contracts.

It is also necessary to distinguish between the financing of housing and financing of infrastructure. Housing markets have unique characteristics and risks associated with them that are different from infrastructure however defined. A defining characteristic of infrastructure is that there is huge and continuing



### WHAT NEXT

Y V REDDY

## Demand, supply and growth slowdowns

There is an ongoing debate about whether the current slowdown reflects a demand- or supply-constrained economy. Analytically, this question is pertinent when a slowdown is cyclical. If aggregate demand is less than potential output, then the economy is demand-constrained. But if actual output is less than potential output, despite the existence of aggregate demand, then it can be termed a supply-constrained slowdown.

Structural slowdowns are more complicated. In the case of a developing country such slowdowns are attributable to specific factors (lack of infrastructure, over-regulation, etc.) but may equally be a consequence of interplay between demand and supply factors.

Demand is a function of the price at which goods and services are offered. Supply side constraints may result in equilibrium prices being so high that aggregate demand is limited. This happens when these constraints lower productivity, and therefore, prices are too high for aggregate demand to be generated at the scale required to support output growth. With no barriers to trade, such demand could also be met through increased imports, which would not contribute to raising domestic output and growth.

I see this interplay in India as follows. The Indian growth story since 1991 has not been about export-led growth except at the margin. It has been powered by domestic consumption and derivative investment demand. In essence, the relative prices of the commodities that the top 150 million people consume have fallen since 1991. Relative to the incomes of this segment of the population the prices of goods that are seen as the “leading indicators” of economic growth — cars, fast moving consumer goods, air travel etc.— have fallen continuously, as a consequence of liberalisation, rising incomes and capital gains accruing to this segment, and adequate availability of producer

and consumer credit to these sectors. As I have argued previously, there is evidence that aggregate demand growth from this segment is tapering off.

However, structural barriers continue to limit aggregate demand for the things consumed by the next 300 million. Thus, mass market textile imports from Bangladesh and Vietnam absorb Indian aggregate demand as domestic industry is not able to move out of high-wage islands to competitive low-wage geographies in northern and eastern India. Despite government being the largest landowner in the country, especially in cities, regulatory and institutional barriers limit the utilisation of this land to produce affordable housing at scale. Indians earning the minimum wage are unable to afford quality health and education without subsidies.

Thus, aggregate demand for things that those earning the minimum wage wish to purchase is squeezed by high prices due to supply side constraints. High logistics costs, expensive and unreliable energy supply, poor investment in human capital, and in research and development, ineffective and discretion-based regulation and administration, lack of coherent and consistent medium-term fiscal and credit policies compound the problem by lowering productivity, increasing costs, and further limiting the scope for increasing the output of these goods and services at scale and quality.

The public policy response has been unsatisfactory. The poor and minimum wage earners alike have to make do with rationed and subsidised access to these goods of very inferior quality. This, at best, limits their welfare loss but does nothing for growth. This leads to high transaction costs and demands for priority in access to these scarce resources or expensive opt-outs. For this reason, public servants and law makers are compensated generously in kind— access to AIIMS medical facilities and expensive private healthcare at subsidised prices, prefer-

interface with public policy, in particular regulation. Perhaps, an institution, that is now proposed, may not serve both housing and infrastructure sectors.

### Sources of finance

Global experience shows that most of the infrastructure in many countries, especially in Asia, has been funded by the government. Alternatively, the DFIs have been used with partial funding by the financial markets or public deposits; but in all cases, strong fiscal support is a dominant feature of financing of infrastructures through DFIs. Banking system played a role in funding infrastructure in Europe. The bond markets have also financed infrastructure in a few countries, particularly in the United States. In brief, there is no universally recommended method of financing infrastructure and different institutional arrangements do co-exist with varying relative emphasis. Hence, country context is important.

### DFIs in India: Pre- and post-reforms

Prominent DFIs in India prior to reforms in the 1990s were IDBI and ICICI. Most of their business was funding manufacturing and, to some extent, services. Their exposure to infrastructure was minimal. The assumption that their demise caused a vacuum in financing of infrastructure is questionable. In any case, DFIs became unviable in the absence of fiscal support; and inability to compete with large corporations for resources in capital markets. Both IDBI and ICICI chose to become banks. Globally, there are many examples of DFIs transforming into universal Banks.

For housing, National Housing Bank could be considered a DFI. So, there has been a DFI for housing for decades; its performance is not a secret. Perhaps, the new DFI for housing will be different. It is not clear whether the Rural Electric Corporation, Power Finance Corporation and Railway Finance Corporation are to be treated as DFIs dealing with infrastructure. If so, what has been their contribution and performance? What lessons can be learnt from them for the proposed new organisation?

Post-reform, the earliest DFI dedicated to infrastructure financing was established in 1997, namely, the Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC). This was promoted and predominantly funded by the government and the Reserve Bank of India, but structured as a non-government company, and had majority private sector shareholding. It is useful to examine why IDFC also became less developmental and more commercial, and finally evolved into a bank.

India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) was set up in 2006 as a wholly-owned government company to provide long-term finance to viable infrastructure projects. Its mandate includes credit enhancement. It has several subsidiaries, including one in the UK. It is also useful to assess the progress made by the recently created National Investment and Infrastructure Fund. It was set up by the Government of India in 2015 to provide long-term capital for infrastructure projects.

It is a good idea to learn from experience while establishing new institutions as DFIs, and it is also good to simultaneously examine such proposals in the context of a wider macro economy, commercial viability and standards of governance, in particular conflicts of interests.

*The writer is a former governor of RBI*

*The writer is director, National Institute of Public Finance and Policy. Views are personal*