

**Unconvincing arguments**

Now that the formal announcement has been made, the full story can be told of all the ways the bureaucracy tried to prevent the creation of the office of the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) and the Department of Military Affairs (DMA); and how the Prime Minister weighed in.

The outgoing Chief of Army Staff Gen. Bipin Rawat was to have become the CDS. He was to retire on December 31. The CDS was cleared by the Cabinet Committee on Security on December 24. Top bureaucrats kept advising the PM to rethink the proposal because of the "disquiet" in the bureaucracy. The retirement age of 65 and parity between the CDS and the cabinet secretary were presented as manifestations of this disquiet. It was also highlighted that unless the gazette notification was issued before December 31, Gen. Rawat could not progress from army chief to CDS in a seamless manner.

In response, PM Narendra Modi told officials he wanted it done the next day. Whatever the sense of disquiet, no bureaucrat was brave enough to disobey the PM.

**A new fan**

Deepika Padukone has an unlikely admirer: Former foreign minister K Natwar Singh! Singh writes that Padukone did not wrong by visiting the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU). He says: "I have never met Deepika Padukone, nor have I seen any of her films. From time to time, I have seen her photographs in magazines. By any standards, she is a stunningly beautiful lady."

**OPINION**

MICHAEL POMPEO

## 'Have re-established deterrence but it's not everlasting'

I was a young soldier back during the Cold War. You can have the greatest army in the world, but it doesn't matter if you are not prepared to use it to achieve your strategic objectives. As one of your scholars here, Victor Davis Hanson, said, "Deterrence is hard to establish and easy to lose."

And let's be honest. For decades, US administrations of both political parties never did enough against Iran to get the deterrence that is necessary to keep us all safe. The JCPOA itself — the nuclear deal — made things worse. It enabled that regime to create wealth, it opened up revenue streams for the Ayatollahs to build up the Shiite militia networks, the very networks — the very networks — that killed an American and imposed enormous risk at our — to our embassy in Baghdad. Rather than blocking those efforts, the deal put Iran on a clear pathway to a nuclear weapon as well, something President Trump began his remarks by saying would never happen on our watch.

So what did we do? We put together a campaign of diplomatic isolation, economic pressure, and military deterrence.

The goal is two-fold. First, we wanted to deprive the regime of resources, resources it needs to perpetrate its malign activity around the world. And second, we just want Iran to behave like a normal nation. Just be like Norway, right? (Laughter.)

Diplomatically, allies and partners have joined us. They are today patrolling the Straits of Hormuz alongside of us in the Persian Gulf to stop Iranian attacks on shipping. Let us not forget how many ships the Iranians pulled from the straits over the past month.

Germany, France, Italy have all put travel bans on a company called Mahan Air. It's an Iranian airline that ferries military — Iranian military assets and weapons to the battle zones.

Argentina and the United Kingdom have both now declared Hizballah a terrorist organisation.

And you have seen finally, too, the economic pressure that we have put in place to cut off roughly 80 per cent of the Iranian oil revenues. We are determined to get at that last 20 per cent, too.

President Rouhani himself said that we have denied the Iranian regime some \$200 billion in lost foreign income and investment as a result of our activities. This is money that would have in large measure gone to support the very activities that would have put you and your fellow citizens at risk.

And you can see it, too. The Iranian people are increasingly angry at their own government for stealing their wealth and for the sake of violently spreading the regime at enormous cost to them.

On the military side, we've warned the Iranians repeatedly — I've done so personally myself — that an attack that took American lives would not be tolerated.

And they tested us, as they had tested previous administrations as well many times before. Past laxity had emboldened them.

But on December 27<sup>th</sup>, at Soleimani's direction, we changed that. On the 31<sup>st</sup>, Iranian-backed militias attacked our embassy in Baghdad and we changed that calculus for them.

The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said it perhaps best. Had we not taken that strike against Qasem Soleimani, our leadership — the recommendation that we made to President Trump — we would have been "culpably negligent" had we not made that recommendation, imposed a significant cost on the regime for their bad decision.

...And Iran hit back, and we're grateful that no lives were lost, and we will never downplay the seriousness of any attack on the United States or its forces. But judging from the type and intensity of the strike, the regime certainly must now understand what we will do if they ever again pose risk to American lives. If Iran escalates, we will end it on our terms.

President Trump reinforced that deterrence when he gave a set of remarks this past week. And these days Iran is making noise about leaving the nuclear deal.

...And our sanctions will continue until the regime stops its terrorist activity and commits to never having nuclear weapons and permits a verification regime which can give the world confidence that that will not take place.

...We have re-established deterrence, but we know it's not everlasting, that risk remains. We are determined not to lose that deterrence. In all cases, we have to do this.

We have to do this to defend freedom and liberty around the world. That's the whole point of President Trump's work, to make our military the strongest it's ever been.

We saw, not just in Iran, but in other places, too, where American deterrence was weak. We watched Russia's 2014 occupation of the Crimea and support for aggression against Ukraine because deterrence had been undermined. We have resumed lethal support to the Ukrainian military.

...For years, too, China has restricted access for American products in its markets, while demanding access for their stuff here. We've made clear that we're going to have a fair and reciprocal trading arrangement with China. We'll demand it. I hope, here in the next handful of hours, we sign the first part of what will be a significant agreement which will improve the lives of American citizens, raise wages for citizens here at home, and increase the economic relationship between our two countries on a set of terms that work for both China and for the United States.

There is a second mission, too. China has stolen massive quantities of American innovation, innovation created at campuses right like this one I'm standing on — everything from genetically engineered crop seeds to self-driving car technology. They stole it. They didn't have to invest or take risk.

We're making progress to make sure that the next part of the deal will improve on the IP protections that are in Phase One of the Chinese trade deal.

*Edited excerpts from a speech by US Secretary of State, Michael Pompeo at the Hoover Institute, Stanford University, California on The Restoration of Deterrence: The Iranian Example, January 13*

**DID THEY REALLY SAY THAT?**

**"Mamata Banerjee is the chief minister of West Bengal and not the leader of the entire country. At least she should understand her constitutional duties."**

Minister for Minority Affairs, Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, in New Delhi on January 16



ILLUSTRATION BY BINAY SINHA

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## 'Voters casting ballot on clear economic issues in many states'

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi stormed back to power in 2019 — despite poor economic performance, a badly managed slowdown and high unemployment — on the back of nationalist appeal. Is it all catching up with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) now? Are street demonstrations on diverse issues a manifestation of economic discontentment?**

Economic discontent is a background condition that is adding fuel to the fire of student movements and other spontaneous movements. To JNU, Jamia, Aligarh, and various other university campuses have now been added the IITs and IIMs — the issue of economic distress cannot be underestimated. Onion and vegetable prices that have driven a surge in the consumer price index, joblessness, even the worry that banks may put a limit on withdrawal, is bringing Hindus and Muslims together on the platform of economic distress. Prashant Kishore of the Janata Dal (United) was the first to point out that the National Register of Citizens (NRC) will divide India on a class basis because of the transactions costs associated with the NRC. After all, did not the Assam NRC leave a lot of Hindus out?

If the economy had been in a better shape, the protests could be muted. It is possible that Hindu-Muslim polarisation would have been even greater in that case.

To add fuel to fire, the government is behaving as if the dismal rate of growth, and the disgraceful unemployment and consumption sta-

tics are not a matter of fact. The prime minister and his colleagues pretend that all is well. Often statistics are sought to be hidden from the public gaze. But citizens must worry, when onion prices and joblessness are at an all-time high, the government is only withholding statistics and praising its own performance. Many who voted the BJP now feel the pinch, be it construction work, delayed MGNREGS payments, or factory or corporate job losses. It is noteworthy that 250 million Indians went on strike on January 8. Many students who are now opposing the government would have also voted the BJP thinking that the prime minister would deliver on his long-standing promise: *Sab ka saath, sab ka vikas* (with everyone for their development).

The strategy of distracting citizens with Pulwama, Balakote, Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the NRC has begun to boomerang in the face of poor governance. The BJP is losing state-level elections when just a few months ago it seemed that the BJP would sweep the country. At that time, Mr. Modi went all the distance to bat with the idea that national- and the state-level elections should be held at the same time. Was India going to turn into a kind of "hybrid democracy" like Bangladesh with no opposition?

This optimism of the ruling party was somewhat overturned when it could not form the government in Maharashtra. Maharashtra is an important state considering its size and wealth.

**CHECKLIST****THE BJP'S NEXT CHALLENGE: RAJYA SABHA**

■ **Where:** In the Rajya Sabha where with 83 seats out of 245, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) does not have a majority on its own. Ordinarily, this wouldn't have mattered given that the party has a network of friends, visible and invisible. But in the fraught political atmosphere in the country today, being at the mercy of friends who have their own agendas is not a secure place to be in. Therefore, the government would like to ensure it has a degree of autonomy of action in the upper house.

■ **When:** As many as 69 MPs will retire from the upper house this year: 51 in April alone. Not much will change in the BJP's favour because in the interim, some states in which they had a majority are now with the Opposition. In Maharashtra, where seven MPs retire, the BJP will have to exert itself to ensure its tally does not fall, now that the Shiv Sena-led opposition alliance is in power. In Uttar Pradesh (11 seats up for grabs), the Opposition

is expected to suffer after the BJP's stunning victory in the last Assembly elections. So the Samajwadi Party's tally in the upper house might go down further. Intriguingly, there is no clarity on the seats from Jammu and Kashmir which was downgraded to a Union Territory and is under President's rule right now.

■ **How:** The Rajya Sabha elections are held indirectly on the basis of an electoral college comprising MLAs from each state Assembly. MLAs don't vote for seats — they vote for candidates based on preference. The more state Assemblies in which a party is in power, the more will be its representation in the upper house.

■ **What it means:** While the BJP will continue to be the single largest party, its hopes of getting a majority in the upper house have been dashed by a rash of recent Assembly election losses, especially in big states like Maharashtra.

Soon thereafter, the BJP lost Jharkhand. The fact that the BJP government was not working for forest rights of the tribal people did not help. No one is complaining about electronic voting machines (EVMs) any more. It seems voters in India are casting their ballot on clear economic issues in many states. The forthcoming Delhi election will test the idea of India once again.

**When we attempt to study "the crowd" in the demonstrations going on all over India, we find there is little in common among it. It is not the Navnirman movement; nor is it the Naxalbari uprising. There are young people from (relatively) wealthy families as well as the middle class and the poor. There are Muslims protesting as well as Hindus. How do you read it?**

These current protests are neither like the Navnirman movement led by Jayaprakash Narayan (JP) nor the Maoist revolt in Naxalbari. What was common to all these movements was political leadership. And, there were parties behind these movements. In the case of the movement led by JP, his towering and uncompromising Gandhi-like presence was a pole star.

Today's women and youth are openly expressing themselves in favour of an alternative idea of inclusive India. Muslim women in Shaheen Bagh, many of them housewives devoid of high academic credentials, could teach scholars a lesson or two in political representation. They are saying that the Muslim in India is an Indian who will not tolerate the status of a second class citizen. It is an affront to Indians if they have to produce special certificates to prove their identity under the threat of NRC. Once upon a time the slogan was "quit India" today it is "hum dekhenge" (we will see!) and "kago amra dekhabo na" (paper, we shall not show!).

The protests in Jamia and JNU have turned into nationwide campaigns. There are a number of causes to struggle for. If higher education can be free in Germany why not in India? Who will take care of the poverty-stricken and talented youth who must contribute to the country's well-being? Should academic institutions be autonomous or should they be ruled by a party-state reminiscent of ones in many former communist and authoritarian regimes?

The manner in which recruitment, appointments and the fees in JNU were sought to be managed — along with caricaturing it as an enemy of the nation — it was clear that JNU was the target of the ruling dispensation. If JNU is such an evil institution, then one must also acknowledge the two alumni in the cabinet and numerous civil servants who run the country, apart from its profound contribution to the life of the intellect. Not only is the current Nobel Prize winner an alumni, scholars in JNU have contributed to the way India has debated its problems, and some even hold chairs in the world's renowned universities.

The idea of India is much deeper than what political parties with anointed leaders can imagine. For example, Swami Vivekananda, the patron saint of the Indian renaissance, contended that the Indian tradition was so inclusive that Hinduism was not just about toleration but assimilation as well. His remarks at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 was the boldest expression of the cosmopolitan view at that time. He articulated the Vedantic ideal lived and experienced by his Master Sri

Ramakrishna Paramahansa — all paths no matter how contradictory they may appear — all lead to the same goal. The next generation that produced Gandhi, Tagore and Azad practised the cosmopolitan version of Hinduism and Islam.

The idea of living with, accepting and learning from diversity is an integral part of national identity that cannot easily be challenged. It is the people of India who are battling for this idea of India — cherished by the founding father and inscribed in the Constitution drafted under the leadership of Dr. Ambedkar. These spontaneous protests devoid of political calculation and expressing the will of the people hold substantial promise for the people of India. Those very persons for whom the Constitution was made wish to abide by it. They foresee the threats posed by an alternative idea of India.

What do we know about spontaneous, leaderless, organisation-less movements? Is Indian democracy and the Indian state resilient and flexible enough to absorb this challenge?

We do not know much about spontaneous leaderless movements like the ones described above. One would worry that these causes may not last in the absence of political parties and leadership that naturally gives shape to social movements.

There is a positive side too. Political calculations that drive parties do not always reflect citizen needs. Opposition parties are sometimes confused regarding whether or not this overt support for the millennial idea of India will boomerang against them. After all, there could be a silent majority that might vote the BJP with even greater fervour if it buys into Hindutva nationalism as a harbinger of long-term progress for the majority population of Hindus.

In this respect, it is truly remarkable that the people of India are leading the polity where political parties often fear to tread. Was the constitution, after all, not about: We the people? The people of India have not only challenged the ruling dispensation with the constitution, they have also opened the eyes of the leadership that sits in the Opposition.

**Do established political parties need to change the way they mobilise in the face of spontaneous protest? Just when they thought they had cracked the social media tool? But the story seems to have gone beyond.**

Political power has battled for all kinds of ideas — such as those that produced the Hindu rate of growth, as well as, those that led to the most remarkable growth surge. India suffered substantial poverty and governance challenges. In response, politics and the state unleashed the rights-based approach to compensate the poor. Politics was leading from the front, reading the aspirations of the poor and of those who create wealth for the country.

That politics is missing today. On the one hand Hindutva nationalism seeks to alter the millennial idea of India, while on the other, the upholders of the dominant millennial tradition who can contribute to the inclusive character of India so prominent in its federal character, seem to have lost the verve to lead from the front. The people could lose despite their toil, if politics did not find a way of incorporating them. This is a serious challenge where the promise of social mobilisation must meet with politics that protects and uplifts the character of our Constitution.

## Saving lives: One drop at a time

**Swarnami Mondal on a Bengaluru-based organisation that is creating a database of voluntary blood donors to ensure timely supply and prevent wastage**

The *Lancet Haematology* study, published in November 2019, points out that India tops the chart when it comes to unmet blood needs and that the country needs to rethink its estimation of how much blood it needs in order to match its demands. The study says, globally, India is battling a shortfall of 41 million units, and demand outstrips supply by 400 per cent; the overall global shortfall is 100 million units.

Thousands of lives each year is lost due to shortage of blood. Bengaluru-based Chethan Gowda faced a similar loss when his teacher died due to shortage of blood. He realised there was a lack of channel connecting the donors to the recipients and awareness around blood donation needed to be spread among youngsters. Chethan's first-hand encounter with blood crisis prompted him to start Khoon — an NGO which aims to resolve blood shortage in India and motivates more people to donate blood — in 2016.

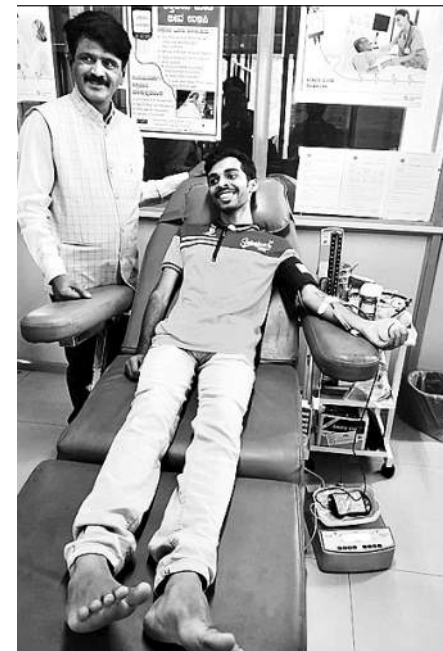
Speaking to *Business Standard*, he says, "A lack of awareness, incorrect information around blood donation in India are some of the main reasons behind us falling short of 3

million units of blood required annually. Even if 1-2 per cent youngsters begin donating blood regularly, we can bridge this gap."

How did Khoon begin its journey?

"It all began with a blood donation camp, but the USP of this blood donation camp was its theme setting," says Chethan, who is now studying for a B.Tech in mechanical engineering. The camp tried to keep the mood light with a musical concert. The turnout was above expectation and they managed to collect quite a lot of blood. "We figured this way we could attract more young people to these blood donation drives and we organised several such theme-based camps since 2016. In four years, the NGO has collected over 87,000 signatories from all over India. Now we conduct six donation camps annually," he says.

The initiative has successfully built a strong database of over 4,000 donors in Bengaluru. The organisation spread its wings to the Northeast in 2017, where a 24X7 blood helpline has been established. In 2018, Khoon forayed in Chhattisgarh's Bhillai. Blood donation camps and awareness programmes were



Gowda donating blood at one of the camps

arranged in Bhillai to bust myths around blood donation.

In 2019, Khoon stepped up its game in research and development and its area of impact was North Karnataka. It partnered with Facebook to implement the tool —

Facebook for blood donation — across all the 214 blood banks in Karnataka. The organisation is now mentoring blood bank technicians on using this Facebook tool towards creating a larger community of donors. It has also partnered with AIDS prevention society to come up with concepts to cut down wastage of blood during medical procedures such as transfusion. Khoon has come up with 100 ml and 50 ml blood sachets for blood transfusion in newborn babies who need less blood than adults.

What challenges does Khoon face? Chethan says, "Blood donation as an ecosystem needs more support. Blood donation, preserving blood and prevention of wastage — all of these needs training, mentorship and funding." He further says, "We can eradicate shortage of blood in the country only if youngsters come up, donate and mobilise others too."

Khoon is a 44-member strong team now and it has over 350 registered volunteers.

**The road ahead**

"Soon we want to create a similar network of donors for pets, specially cats and dogs. As of now, there are only two Facebook groups working for this cause and many pets die due to the want of blood. The plan is in process and this project will be done in collaboration with veterinary hospitals," Chethan says. Khoon also looks at creating training modules for blood bank technicians in regional languages in times to come.



## Taxing the digital economy

Several corporate giants have benefited by avoiding taxes

Even as the US-China trade war appears to have paused, another dispute could be on the horizon. This time, it could be the US versus several major European Union (EU) nations, including France, Italy, Belgium, The Czech Republic, Hungary, Austria and, even perhaps, the UK. The disagreement centres on the levying of a new type of tax on digital revenue. This may escalate into a wider conflict, since the EU and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are looking at framing such taxes. This will be one of the largest areas of concern at the upcoming Davos Meet.

France has started levying a digital tax retrospectively with effect from January last year. Any entity providing a range of specified online services with revenues of €25 million in France and global revenues of €750 million will have to pay 3 per cent of its French revenues under this new tax. The services include "Provision of a digital interface, targeted advertising, transmission of user data for advertising purposes", and so on. The other nations have either imposed similar taxes, or propose to do so soon with local variations on revenue thresholds and defined services. The EU hopes to have a uniform framework for such taxes in place by end-2020,

and the OECD has started discussions among its members.

There are several unusual aspects to this tax. For one, it is levied on revenue and not on profit. It is also proposed to be applicable to any entity that performs such digital services, regardless of its physical presence. The application of relatively high thresholds in terms of revenue is meant to insulate small businesses and start-ups. The idea is to capture tax revenue from companies that incorporate in tax havens, and then supply digital services in large markets without maintaining an official physical presence. Where physical exports are concerned, the EU's laws on "inter-community acquisition of goods" mean that no VAT is payable, and profits, if any, are taxed in the nation of incorporation. This enables free movements of goods and services across the EU but using such provisions also enables digital service providers to

substantially escape the tax net.

This is called the GAFA tax in French discourse because it would directly affect Google, Amazon, Facebook, and Apple. It would also impact other companies smaller in size. The EU reckoned that a flat tax across its member nations could generate roughly €5 billion in annual revenue. Since the GAFA are US-based digital giants, the US government has naturally taken an interest. Equally predictably, President Donald Trump has threatened countervailing sanctions on France, whose exports to the US are worth roughly €25 billion. Logically speaking, if the situation is not resolved, those sanctions would be extended to other EU nations with similar taxes, and perhaps to the entire eurozone. Talks at Davos between the US treasury secretary and the French finance minister could obviate such a possibility.

It's unusual to levy a tax on revenue.

However, the very fact that large international bodies are considering this, and major countries have imposed such taxes, indicates that this has been a gigantic loophole for internet-based services. Indeed, the EU has spent several years debating such a tax before individual nations started imposing it. But several EU nations including Sweden, Finland, and Poland have expressed reservations about this sort of tax. But the OECD is even larger in terms of membership, and it has a bigger geographical spread and could suggest a tax that was global in scope. Clearly, the concept of such a tax is not going to disappear. It remains to be seen if it morphs in format, given American objections, but something akin to this is very likely to stay on the table. The digital economy has benefited from three decades of tax avoidance. Attempts to bring it under the tax net could lead to a trade war.

## China and the US push in West Asia

Beijing's expanding footprint in this oil-rich region has set the stage for a competition with Washington



US President Donald Trump with Chinese Vice Premier Liu He before signing the trade agreement with China at the White House on January 15, 2020

PHOTO: PTI

HARSH V PANT

In more ways than one, the year gone by was *annus horribilis* for the Chinese Communist Party and its leader, Xi Jinping. From declining economic growth and a Belt and Road Initiative debacle to troubles in Hong Kong and Xinjiang, there were multiple fires that had to be doused. The Donald Trump Administration changed not only the American approach towards China but also the wider Western approach towards the country, by asking for a balanced relationship, using unrelenting economic pressure.

However, the first phase of a trade deal, which had finally been agreed to by Washington and Beijing in December last year, was signed on January 15. It commits China to buying \$200 billion more in US farm products and other goods and services over two years than it did in 2017, before the trade war erupted. Yet, it leaves in place many tariffs in an attempt to continue to limit the supply of Chinese goods to the US market.

Earlier, just when Beijing would have thought it could not get any worse for it, Mr Trump gave China a New Year gift by escalating a crisis in West Asia by giving orders to target the head of the Revolutionary Guard's elite Quds Force, Qassem Soleimani. This resulted in the most significant confrontation between the US and Iran in recent years, dramatically heightening tensions in a region already beset with multiple fault lines.

In an election year in America, Mr Trump would have made China a focus of his foreign policy achievements, given that he has pushed his rivals also to acknowledge problems in the traditional American approach towards Beijing. A broader debate on China

would also entail a focus on America's changing regional priorities in the Indo-Pacific.

Compared to Barack Obama's pivot to Asia, Mr Trump's concept of a free and open Indo-Pacific has held greater promise, even though a concrete policy approach hasn't fully materialised. But now, after the renewed turbulence in West Asia, America will have to focus greater attention on the region. This will once again give breathing space to China, which has continued to expand its military and economic profile in the Indo-Pacific.

Even in West Asia, where America is struggling to retain its relevance, China's footprint has been expanding. And unlike the US, it has so far managed to be on good terms with not only Iran but also the Arab Gulf states and Israel. China is not only among the top three defence partners for Iran and its largest trading partner, but it has also been expanding the scope of its bilateral engagement with Tehran. This resulted in China-Iran-Russia joint naval exercises near the strategically vital Strait of Hormuz in the Indian Ocean last month. China has provided the shield which has allowed Iran to continue to develop its defence capabilities despite global sanctions.

Beijing was quick to condemn the "military adventurist act by the US", which "goes against basic norms governing international relations and will aggravate tensions and turbulence in the region" even as Tehran hoped China could "play an important role in preventing escalation of regional tensions." But Beijing has shown only limited appetite so far in taking on the US directly, apart from defending the Iranian nuclear deal and criticising American unilateralism.

In fact, it has reduced its import of Iranian oil dramatically after the ending of US sanctions waivers last

year. China was Iran's biggest oil buyer prior to US sanctions, but after that despite Iran's attempt to convince China to continue trading with Iran, there has been reluctance on the part of Beijing to violate the sanctions regime. The payment for Iranian oil is also geared towards paying Iranian debts to Chinese companies that had invested in Iran's oil and gas sector.

The US has maintained its primacy in West Asia for the last several decades and the Carter Doctrine, enunciated by former US President Jimmy Carter in 1980, explicitly committed Washington to defend the oil fields of the Persian Gulf against external threats. Despite signals that Mr Trump might be going back on this decades-old doctrine, he has once again brought the debate on America's regional role to centre stage. And with China's rise in the region, the stage might be set for a regional competition between the two. Against the backdrop of America's recent actions, China's power and influence in West Asia is likely to grow as it seeks greater responsibility for securing its regional interests.

Yet, there is no evidence so far that China wants to take on America's role in West Asia. In fact, it would like to make sure that despite its rhetoric, it trends lightly in the region, especially as this moment presents another opportunity for Beijing to strengthen its power infrastructure, which has been growing weak over the past few years. Wars in West Asia have sapped American power while emboldening China in the past. Beijing will be hoping that history might once again repeat itself.

The writer is director of research at Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi, and professor of International Relations, Department of Defence Studies, King's College London

## How Indian IT can drive global innovation

KESHAV MURUGESH

Amid talks of a slowdown and a general air of insecurity across global economies, India's information technology (IT) and business process management (BPM) industry remains bullish about driving growth through innovation and skilling. Our ability to scale up these efforts will be essential to the growth of the sector across the world.

India is set to lead a wave of optimism and innovation for industries world-wide. Its abundant intellectual and human capital will see it become a powerhouse of global innovation.

### Think digital, think India

The fourth industrial revolution that we are currently witnessing is being defined as the new age of automation, driven by unprecedented technological advances. With the entire gamut of work activities being increasingly automated, the implications for the global economy are manifold — the changing nature of work, job roles being re-defined, and certain job roles becoming redundant, leading to growth in new occupations and new roles.

India continues to prove its ability to deploy digital at scale. The role of the Indian IT industry is to position India as a global hub for innovation and co-creation by imbibing the ideology of "think digital, think India". The aim is to drive the focus towards emerging technologies, digitally skilling talent and ensuring that the pace of transformation in the country meets the global standard.

**India is steadily working to become a pool of market-ready talent for the world at large, not just for domestic needs. Its ample intellectual and human capital will help it get there**

### The six growth drivers

The global digital transformation market is expected to grow from \$445.4 billion in 2017 to \$2.28 trillion by 2025 at a compound annual growth rate of 24.3 per cent. Every country ought to take this opportunity or threat (depending on how one sees it) most seriously. If leveraged well, you increase your competitive advantage exponentially; if not, the risk of being relegated to oblivion increases by as much as 50 per cent. What are the drivers to grab this opportunity?

There are six digital technologies which are primarily driving the industry's growth — blockchain, immersive media, internet of things, cloud, robotics and intelligent automation. India leads developed countries such as the US, UK and Japan in deployment of artificial intelligence and robotic process automation-based technologies. Ours is one of the fastest-growing internet economies, with more than 560 million internet subscribers, of which nearly 540 million are mobile internet subscribers as well. To put it simply, 90 per cent of the Indian population has access to mobile phones, half of which has access to the internet, one way or the other. The government's avowed vision of a trillion-dollar

digital economy by 2025 is actually well on target, which is likely to be 18-20 per cent of the country's nominal gross domestic product by then.

### Skilling and scaling up

As India paves its path to be a global economic powerhouse, it is imperative to equip its working population with employability skills. Today, India is one of the youngest countries in the world with more than 62 per cent of the population in the working age group (15-59 years) and more than 54 per cent of the total population below 25 years of age.

That said, as a host of emerging technologies change the future of work, the IT-BPM industry faces massive disruption. Of the industry's four to five million employees, 1.5-2 million are expected to require re-skilling in the next four to five years.

Even though it's the need of the hour, re-skilling is a gradual and steep learning curve which is based on value creation and not a quantitative number. Businesses, workers and economies must finance and implement a re-skilling revolution as a critical investment. The problem is too large to be handled alone, and needs a collaborative industry-level response. The IT-BPM industry has stepped up to the challenge, propelled by Nasscom's FutureSkills initiative. The immediate objectives include transforming 100 universities to supply digital talent, and up-skilling an additional two million professionals by 2025.

India is steadily working to become a pool of market-ready talent for the world at large, and not just for domestic needs.

### Overhauling the grassroots

Although industry leaders will drive innovation and technological best practices, ingenuity is a skill developed at the grassroots level. There is a need to equip young Indian minds with the perspective, talent, and resources to navigate a future marked by constant change. There is a shift from STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics). STEAM is not new, but the urgency to incorporate it in today's time is critical. Lots of hands-on learning opportunities are emerging in schools and institutes all over the world, encouraging collaboration in learning and discovery, using science and tech resources such as soft circuits, embedded video, game creation, data art, and more.

A consistent culture of innovation and growth builds legacies of the future. Despite the chatter of austerity and conservative business growth, proactive and aggressive development is the safest and smartest route to progress.

The writer is group CEO, WNS Global Services, and chairman, Nasscom

## OTHER VIEWS

### Begin the healing process in Kashmir, and also engage Pak

This will help prevent the dispute being internationalised

For the second time since the government's decision on Article 370 in August last year, China raised the issue of Kashmir at the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on Wednesday, prompting a protest from New Delhi. In its response, the government said that Beijing should "refrain from bringing a bilateral issue into the UNSC, and accused China of working at Pakistan's behest. India's case rests on the 1972 Shimla accord, where India and Pakistan agreed to resolve the Kashmir issue bilaterally. China's repeated raising of Kashmir since last August, which includes an aborted attempt in December, is unconstructive and will impact the India-China bilateral relationship if it continues. It is also unlikely to push the government, which has already defied several international calls from friendly countries, into lifting restrictions or rolling back its measures in Kashmir.

While China's move may be unwarranted, it is yet another reason for New Delhi to take heed of the continuing and unprecedented criticism of its actions in Kashmir. Nor can India maintain the duality of insisting, on the one hand, that Kashmir is a bilateral issue and, on the other hand, rejecting all bilateral talks with Pakistan. At some point, the government



must push for normalisation of ties with Pakistan as well as for the lifting of restrictions in Jammu and Kashmir. Only when all communications are restored, all political prisoners freed and added security restrictions removed can the real task of healing in J&K even begin.

The Hindu, January 17

### Crime and impunity in sport

SAI must take stern corrective action

A pay reduction of ₹910 per month was the penalty a Sports Authority of India (SAI) coach paid for being found guilty of sexual harassment, according to an RTI response sought by *The Indian Express*. Denying increments for a year was as harsh as it got for a few other offenders who sexually abused young athletes left in their care and guardianship at residential sports camps that churn out athletes, many of whom go on to represent India. The sports ministry, under which the SAI functions, cannot escape the blame. It has been found to be too lenient on those who have inflicted life-long psychological trauma on proven match-winners with exemplary athletic prowess and

unflinching on-court temperament.

These cases also bring into focus the lack of strict security protocols at these year-long camps. While there's a strict code of conduct for players, there are no dos and don'ts for the coaches. Long dragging inquiries and some dodgy acquittals have triggered talk of the SAI being more concerned about its image than the victims. This injustice should rattle the conscience of sports lovers who will start demanding Olympic medals this leap year without sparing a thought for the abusive systems where the athletes learn to give up without a fight very early in life.

The Indian Express, January 17

### Right to protest is at risk

Bhim Army bail conditions puzzling

A court rebuking the police for detention without sufficient cause is becoming a rarity in India. The additional sessions judge at the Tis Hazari court in Delhi, however, did just that. At the bail hearing of Chandrashekhar Azad, the Bhim Army chief accused of inciting crowds during his *dharma* in protest against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens at the Jama Masjid on December 20, 2019, the judge, Kamini Lau, insisted that the right to peaceful protest was constitutional. Two points of Ms Lau's rebuke to the police stand out. One was her comment that the police were behaving as though Jama Masjid were in Pakistan. The more important point, how-

ever, was Ms Lau's reported observation that people were protesting on the streets because what should have been said inside Parliament was not said.

At the same time, once bail was granted, the conditions attached to it appeared to be puzzling. Not only was Mr Azad asked not to commit similar offences — none of which has been established and no damage to public property assessed so far — but he has also been asked not to visit Delhi for the four weeks before the assembly elections. It cannot be but disappointing that the court's clarity regarding peaceful protest does not appear to be reflected in the bail conditions.

The Telegraph, January 17



# Opinion

SUNDAY, JANUARY 19, 2020

**JAMMU AND KASHMIR** was closed down on the evening of August 4, 2019. The assault on human rights began that night. The new team that had taken over — the Governor, advisors, the Chief Secretary, the Director General of Police etc — had scant respect for the Constitution of India.

On August 4, 2019, mobile phone networks, Internet services and land-line connectivity were discontinued in the Kashmir Valley. Restrictions on movement were imposed. On August 5, 2019, Constitutional Order 272 was issued by the President stripping J&K of its special status and applying all the provisions of the Constitution of India to the proposed Union Territories. On the same day, district magistrates invoked Section 144 CrPC and imposed restrictions on movement and public gatherings. Hundreds of political leaders and activists were detained. Three former chief ministers were detained — and are still in custody — without charges.

Ms Anuradha Bhasin, Executive Editor of *Kashmir Times*, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, MP, and others challenged these restrictions in the Supreme Court. Apart from the contention that the fundamental rights of the petitioners had been breached, Ms Bhasin contended she was unable to publish her newspaper and freedom of press had been contravened.

On September 16, 2019, the Supreme Court ordered that the state government “keeping in mind the national interest and internal security shall make all endeavours to ensure that normal life is restored in Kashmir”. As feared, normal life was not restored. On October 10, 2019, the Court recorded the submission of the Central government that some restrictions “have been relaxed”. Effectively, however, there was no interim order that the Central and state governments were obliged to comply with, and the conditions in J&K, particularly in the Kashmir Valley, remained the same.

## Issues and answers

The cases were heard on several days, judgment was reserved on November 27, 2019, and pronounced on January 10, 2020.

The Court had framed five issues. Let me give a snapshot of the issues and the answers given by the Court:

**1. Can the government claim exemption from producing the orders under Section 144 CrPC?**

**Ans:** NO

**2. Are freedom of speech and freedom to carry on business over the Internet fundamental rights?**

**Ans:** YES, under Article 19(1)(a) and (g), respectively, and every order suspending Internet shall be reviewed within 7 days (and periodically within 7 days of the previous review).

**3. Is access to Internet a fundamental right?**

**Not answered.**

**4. Whether the restrictions under Section 144 were valid?**

**Ans:** After stating that the power is preventive and remedial, that the order must balance the rights and restrictions based on the principle of proportionality and that repetitive orders cannot be passed, the Court directed the state/authorities “to review forthwith the need for continuance of the orders”.

## ACROSS THE AISLE

P Chidambaram



# The law and the reality



Opposition leader Ghulam Nabi Azad and AICC general secretary Ambika Soni address the media in Jammu

**5. Whether freedom of press was violated?**

**Ans:** After examining the doctrine of “chilling effect”, and considering that the newspaper had resumed publication, the Court held “we do not deem it fit to indulge more in the issue than to state that responsible governments are required to respect the freedom of the press at all times”.

## Striking a balance

The findings of the Court — and the reluctance to render findings on some issues — were not surprising. At the very beginning of the judgment, the Court had made its approach clear: “Our limited scope is to strike a balance between the liberty and security concerns... we are here only to ensure that citizens are provided all the rights and liberty to the highest extent in a given situation while ensuring security at the same time.”

During the period from August 4, 2019, to January 13, 2020, when the

government was maintaining so-called ‘normalcy’, 20 civilians and 36 militants were killed and eight security personnel lost their lives.

As you read this column, restrictions continue on Internet, on movement, on public gatherings, on political activities, on speech and writing, and on visitors to the Valley. Political leaders continue to be in custody without charges. So, has anything really changed after the judgment?

Benjamin Franklin said “Those who would give up essential Liberty, to purchase a little temporary Safety, deserve neither Liberty nor Safety”. The context was different; nevertheless that quote has become a classic whenever there is a conflict between liberty and security. Would the conclusions have been different if the Court had kept as its guiding principle the dictum of Benjamin Franklin?

## Will anything change?

The Court’s judgment gives the government a way to retreat from its

authoritarian and militaristic approach to the Kashmir issue — but I doubt the government will take that route. The judgment also gives hope to the seven million people of the Kashmir Valley that their freedoms will be restored — although there is no sign yet of that happening seven days later.

The Respondents (Central and the Union Territory governments) are unhappy that their actions will constantly be subject to judicial review. The Petitioners are unhappy that they have got no real relief, only propositions of law.

More could have been done by the Court, as in the Privacy case (*Justice Puttaswamy*). An opportunity was lost. Maybe more will be done at the next hearing of the case (you bet there will be an action for contempt) or at the hearing of the next case. Sometimes, the law can disappoint.



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## INSIDE TRACK

COOMI KAPOOR

## Central hall out?

Parliament’s Central Hall is not simply the large hall where both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha members attend joint sessions twice annually. Through most of the year, it is a meeting place for MPs, past and present, and senior journalists to exchange notes over coffee, tea and snacks, between attending sessions in the House. For over half a century, Central Hall has served as a convenient neutral turf for government and opposition leaders and journalists to informally exchange news and views. That way the media gets a better understanding of the thinking of parties and government and vice versa. However, since the start of the Modi 2.0 government, there have been vague hints that the media might be barred from Central Hall. Speaker Om Birla assured a journalist that there was no such move. But a comment last week at *The Indian Express* Idea Exchange by Bimal Patel, the architect chosen to draw up plans for a restructure of the Central Vista, including Parliament, has set alarm bells ringing. Patel remarked that when he showed his blue print for the three halls of Parliament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi, he suggested that there was no need for the joint session hall. A hall for the Lok Sabha to accommodate a joint session, and another for the Rajya Sabha was sufficient.

## Homeward outlook

In Modi 1.0, the powerful National Security Advisor Ajit Doval was perceived as encroaching on the turf of the Home and External Affairs Ministries. But in Modi 2.0, Doval does not pose any threat. The unquestioned power centre is the Home Ministry, where Amit Shah presides unchallenged. During the recent two-day tour of 15 foreign envoys to Kashmir, Doval, who initiated the visit, and the MEA officials who should normally have been in charge were overshadowed by the Home Ministry. The MEA is keen to counter international criticism over conditions in Kashmir, but Shah is not overly perturbed since he views such perceptions as fuelled by a lobby of habitual anti-India baiters. Even foreign envoys in India are conscious of the importance of Shah. Several senior diplomats have sought an appointment with the Home Minister. Shah has declined all requests. He agreed only to grant an appointment to the representative of a friendly island nation, since he felt the man was a kindred spirit. However, the MEA

advised against the meeting, since it would be perceived as a snub to other envoys.

## Intelligent swipes

The cold vibes between Madhya Pradesh chief minister Kamal Nath and Congress Rajya Sabha MP Jairam Ramesh were evident at a recent book festival in Bhopal. Nath was chief guest and Ramesh was on the dais as the author of a book on Jawaharlal Nehru and V K Krishna Menon. Introducing Nath, Ramesh commented tongue in-cheek that when he worked under Nath as Minister of State in the Commerce Ministry, Nath was so “super intelligent”, he didn’t feel the need to allocate any work to his junior. Nath retorted that Ramesh was so “super intellectual”, he didn’t need any mundane ministry work. While Nath was Ramesh’s boss in Manmohan Singh’s first government, later Ramesh became a Cabinet minister and exerted greater clout in the party because of his proximity to Rahul Gandhi.

## Lock them up

Transport minister Nitin Gadkari does not hide his frustration with obstructionist bureaucrats. Infuriated with the slow pace of a file from the desk of a director-level officer to a joint secretary, additional secretary and secretary, the plain-speaking Gadkari threatened his officers that he would lock them all up in a room until they worked out a solution. Last week, at a road safety meeting in Delhi, Gadkari warned that “dead assets in government, who neither take decisions nor allow others to work, would be shown the door”. While such a drastic step may not yet be imminent, it is learnt that there is a proposal to reduce the retirement age of Central government officers from 60 years to either 55 or 58 years. An alternative suggestion is that no officer should be allowed more than 30 or 33 years of service.

## Film scrapped

Before she passed away, the late Sushma Swaraj wanted to make a documentary on ‘A Day in the Life of an MEA Officer’. In the proposed feature, the articulate Swaraj was filmed expounding on what a job in the Foreign Office entailed. After Swaraj’s untimely death, it was decided that the focus of the film would be changed, the footage re-worked and some additional shots added so that it would be a fitting cinematic tribute to Swaraj. But strangely, the powers-that-be changed their minds and the documentary was simply scrapped.

# Spare test cricket

The love for Test cricket has been unambiguous. Can resistance from stalwarts dilute the four-day Test contest?

## RINGSIDE VIEW

Shamik Chakrabarty



**THE INTERNATIONAL CRICKET** Council (ICC) was enjoying an elongated holiday. The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) under its erstwhile dispensation became a pushover. The ICC took the opportunity to marginalise cricket’s only superpower, bringing on a rejigged governance structure and financial model, detrimental to the Indian board. The ICC will not get away with rejigging of Test cricket, should it formally propose to make four-day Tests mandatory as part of the World Test Championship from 2023 onwards. The BCCI is back and the ICC’s holiday is over.

During a private conversation a few days ago, a top BCCI official just dismissed the idea of four-day Tests. He took exception to the reported attempt to shake the foundations of the game’s purest format, informing that no way the Indian board would be supporting it. And even if the ICC’s cricket committee headed by Anil Kumble formally proposes the change dur-

ing its meeting in March, without the BCCI’s backing the plan runs the risk of falling flat.

Virender Sehwag was at his sarcastic best, as he rubbished the idea of four-day Tests while delivering the MAK Pataudi Memorial Lecture. “*Chaar din ki chandni hoti hai, Test match nahi... Jal ki machli jal mein hi acchi hai, bahar nikaloge toh mar jaegi* (the moon shines for four days, but not Test cricket. A fish out of water is a dead fish).” India captain Virat Kohli, too, was dismissive. “Look, I am not a fan. I think the intent will not be right then because then you will speak of three-day Tests, I mean where do you end? Then you will speak of Test cricket disappearing. I don’t endorse that at all.” Sachin Tendulkar has voiced his disapproval as well. “From a purist’s point of view and as an admirer of Test cricket, I don’t think it should be tinkered with. The format has to be played in the way it has been played for so many years.”

Following his Newlands heroics that helped England win the second Test against South Africa in the final session of the game, Ben Stokes, the world’s best all-rounder, threw his weight behind the traditional, five-day format. “It’s why five-day cricket should always be around. Games like these are unforgettable. We will remember it for a long time, so will South



Could four-day Test matches make for a better game or a financially convenient one?

FILE PHOTO

Africa and it will go down as one of the greats,” Stokes had said at the post-match presentation.

On the face of it, the ICC wants to make four-day Tests mandatory from 2023 as a measure to create windows for its own events. The game’s global body has planned eight flagship events during the next eight-year rights cycle, starting 2023. Four-day Tests could free up a window in excess of 300 days during an eight-year cycle. The

ICC can use the freed up space to incorporate its own events.

The ICC reportedly wants to make four-day Tests mandatory with an eye to dwindling stadium attendances and also the fact that more than 60% of matches over the past couple of years have finished inside four days. The excuses hardly hold water. You don’t take away the *aalaap* part from *maru-bihag* for example, because it’s slow and doesn’t have as many takers as

*apna time aayega...* Test cricket has its own audience who should be respected. They are the reason why Test cricket has survived and will survive despite many an obituary attempts. The number is significant enough to keep the broadcasters interested. With regards to a reduced workload of the players, there’s every possibility that the freed up space, the leftover after the ICC events, could be used to slot in a few more franchise-based T20 or T10 leagues. “Cor-

ruptors like T20s. They like the explosion of T20 tournaments,” the ICC General Manager (anti-corruption) Alex Marshall had said, when the global body hosted a media day at its headquarters in Dubai a couple of years ago.

Yes, Test cricket is expensive. Only the big three — India, England Australia — have the financial wherewithal to afford it. As former England captain and the current England and Wales Cricket Board director of cricket Andrew Strauss told *The Guardian*: “We shouldn’t assume Test cricket is healthy just because it is popular in England. In lots of parts of the world, boards are struggling financially and Test cricket is not paying the bills.” This is one side of the story. At the same time, Test cricket becomes lucrative for smaller nations also, when they play against the big three. Besides, in 2017, the ICC approved four-day Tests and subsequently South Africa hosted one against Zimbabwe, while England played a four-day Test against Ireland last July. So subject to mutual consent, teams have the provision to play four-day Tests during bilateral series.

The ICC shouldn’t forget that it is an organisation of its members and not the other way round. It cannot impose anything on its member boards. From a cricketer’s point of view, four-day Tests could make spinners’ involvement peripheral. It could play a spoilsport to fifth day humdingers. The most memorable Test that India had played in the last two decades produced a result deep into the final session on day five — against Australia at Eden Gardens in 2001.



Across THE AISLE



**PCHIDAMBARAM**  
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Fifth COLUMN

TAVLEEN SINGH

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# Why offend Mr Bezos?

SINCE HE began his second term as Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has talked of many things. Nationalism, Kashmir, citizenship, Pakistan, patriotism, treacherous Congress leaders. The one thing he seems to avoid talking about is the economy. Is this because he knows that the economy is in worse shape now than when he first became Prime Minister? Is this because as an astute politician he has noticed that much of the unrest we have seen on campuses across India is because India's young people are beginning to feel a sense of hopelessness? A terrifying realisation that no matter how hard they work at their studies they could remain jobless for years?

Wherever I go these days I meet educated young Indians, many of whom voted for Modi, who admit that the thought of the future frightens them. They wear jeans, carry mobile phones and cut their hair in the latest fashion and almost the first thing they say to me is that they would be grateful if I could help them find a job. Not a government job. Just one that does not involve menial work. Even a street child I have helped with her education wants to be a fashion designer.

If for no other reason than that India faces an unemployment crisis, we should have welcomed Jeff Bezos with open arms last week. He tried his best to assure Modi and his ministers that he came bearing the gift of creating a million new jobs by 2025. Wearing an Indian waistcoat and radiating hope and goodwill, the world's richest man declared that he was sure that the 21st century would be India's century. But, instead of being welcomed, he was insulted publicly by Modi's Minister of Commerce who told him that he did India no "favours" by offering to invest a billion dollars. "They (Amazon) may have put in a billion dollars, but then, if they make a loss of a billion dollars every year, then they jolly well have to finance that billion dollars," said Piyush Goyal. If this was not rude enough, there was more to come. A senior BJP official intervened to tweet that Bezos order his newspaper, *The Washington Post*, to start writing nice things about the Modi government if he wanted to do business here.

The Prime Minister himself is so sensitive about the sully of his image abroad by 'liberal' newspapers that he found no time to grant Bezos an audience. An odd decision if you consider that he travels to distant lands regularly to urge investors to come 'Make in India'. Amazon is already, in its fashion, making in India. In rural India, Amazon has become almost a synonym for online shopping. Many of the unemployed youths I run into on my travels regularly go to it to buy everything from small household goods to books. Since in my own case I restrict my online shopping to books, I am constantly startled by the range of goods that young Indians are buying on Amazon. Insulting Bezos was in my view a mistake on the part of the Modi government.

Another mistake that the Prime Minister needs to pay much more attention to is his neglect of the economy in pursuit of political goals like abrogating Article 370 and passing that amendment to the citizenship law that has caused so much misgiving and mistrust. Both the Prime Minister and his Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, have repeatedly urged Indian businessmen to invest without fear, but if this has not begun to happen, it is on account of misgiving and mistrust. The mission to 'eradicate' black money that began with demonetisation has given so much power to petty officials that they have all started to behave with the same obnoxious officiousness they displayed in bad old socialist times when the Licence Raj was alive and dominant. I live in Mumbai and can report that in recent months I have not met a single businessman, big or small, who has said that business was good.

What should worry the Prime Minister more is that most people blame him for what has gone wrong, whether it is businessmen, shopkeepers or jobless youth. In one voice they say that they voted for Modi not once but twice in the hope that he would concentrate on reviving the economy. When I ask if they are not pleased that such big political reforms as the abrogation of Article 370 have happened, they admit that they are not displeased. But that what they want more is for the economy to start showing signs of real recovery. It is in Modi's hands to control the uncertainty that is caused by the endless new rules and regulations that his officials have come up with. But it is in the hands of men like Bezos to create the millions of jobs that young Indians desperately need.

inside TRACK

COOMIKAPOOR



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History HEADLINE

DISHA WADEKAR

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# The true daughters of Savitribai Phule

THE DAUNTLESS women of Shaheen Bagh, who have continued a sit-in protest on the main highway between Delhi and Noida for weeks, braving harsh winter days and nights, have emerged as a national symbol of dissent against the National Population Register-National Register of Citizens-Citizenship (Amendment) Act regime. On December 15, after they stood up to the cowardly attack by police on Jamia Millia Islamia, the nationwide anti-CAA agitation found its heroes in Akhtarista Ansari, Chanda Yadav, Ladeeda Farsana and Ayesha Hindu — all young Jamia students in their 20s.

Not far away, at Jawaharlal Nehru University, Aishe Ghosh, who was injured in the violent mob attack on the campus, has been leading a struggle against fee hike, thus seen by many as a symbol of accessible education for all.

In all these protests, where woman have emerged as leaders, there is common reference to Savitribai Phule and Fatima Begum Sheikh. The slogans reveal the spirit with which these women have been challenging the government — "Nahin Hindu, Nahin Musalman, Hum hain Savitri-Fatima ki santan" (Neither Hindu, nor Muslim, we are children of Savitribai Phule and Fatima Begum).

Nearly 170 years ago, Savitribai Phule had stood up against Brahminical oppression to fight for the right to education of women and Shudras. Savitribai Phule and Fatima Sheikh too were pelted with stones by anti-social forces at the time. The succeeding generations of women who have been leaders in fighting discriminatory social systems, including the ones who have risen to the occasion during the anti-CAA protests, are all in the truest sense the daughters of Savitribai and Fatimabi.

On January 1, 1848, Savitribai Phule, along with Jyotiba Phule and Fatima Begum, opened India's first school for girls. At the time, when social reform movements were dominated by upper-caste men, Savitribai, a woman from a Bahujan community, became a name in anti-caste and feminist reforms. The Brahminical social structure at the time denied education to women, OBCs and ati-Shudras (Dalits), and all customs were designed to preserve this structure. Reformers contemporary to Savitribai and Jyotiba took on the customs of widow re-marriage, child marriage, female ed-



A poster against the citizenship Act featuring Savitribai Phule. Express

ucation, ban on foreign travel, etc. However, most of them didn't raise issues pertaining to Shudras and Ati-Shudras or address the root cause of the problem — Brahminical scriptures and ideology.

Savitribai and Jyotiba, on the other hand, through their writings, speeches and public interventions, attacked *Manusmriti* and *Brahmanwad*. They were among the first to identify the Indian social structure, characterised by an unequal relationship between the oppressors and the oppressed, and putting the *Stri-Shudra-Ati Shudras*, that is women, untouchables, tribes and all others, at the receiving end of the Brahminical order.

Savitribai was among the first to explain how *Brahmanwad* and *Manusmriti* "created a society based on inequality", calling it "an inhuman play of cunning beings" in her poem *So Says Manu*. She was the first woman author to get published at a time when women were not even seen or heard. She also founded alternative systems such as Satyashodhak Samaj and Satyashodhak marriages. The genius of Savitribai in forging alliances of the marginalised can be seen from the barbers' (OBCs) strike organised by her and Jyotiba in 1889 against the barbaric practice of tonsuring heads of Brahmin widows.

Savitribai's life is testament to her fight for rights of all who were rendered second-grade citizens by the Brahminical

forces, and her triumph over them. Maybe that is why, on her 189th birthday, women and members of the LGBTQ community organised a nationwide protest against CAA and evoked her legacy.

The apprehensions of women, Dalits, tribals, LGBTQ community and people with disabilities about the NPR-NRC-CAA regime are valid. These marginalised sections face further disenfranchisement with CAA and NRC, evident from a report by advocacy organisation Women Against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS). The WSS study, conducted in Assam where the NRC was undertaken, found that women in general, and women from marginal and oppressed communities in particular, have historically been excluded from entitlements to land and education and have almost no documentation to prove their existence as citizens.

Bhim Army chief Chandrashekhar Azad raises similar concerns of how historically excluded Dalits, Adivasis and nomadic tribes would be the worst affected by NPR-NRC-CAA.

It is very clear that like the *Manusmriti* deemed Shudra, Ati-shudras and women secondary citizens, the NPR-NRC-CAA is designed to reject Muslims, women, Dalits, Bahujans, Adivasis, LGBTQ community and people with disabilities, and consolidate power in the hands of a few Brahminical forces. The legacy of Savitribai Phule along with Birsu Munda, Jyotiba Phule and Babasaheb Ambedkar should serve as a constant reminder of this ideological struggle.

The daughters of Savitribai who have emerged as the leaders of this movement must form alliances and cross-sectional ties like she did. Like her, they need to write, speak and act on their words. They will be challenged, like Savitribai was, but they must speak up in their cities, towns and villages, in their universities and offices, on streets and and even in their houses, to save the Constitution and to make the constitutional dream of 'justice, liberty and equality' a reality.

In these dark times, Savitribai burns like the light of revolution. By retreading her steps, we will be able to reify the egalitarian society of her dreams.

The writer, an activist of Dalit and gender issues, is part of the legal team challenging CAA in the Supreme Court

Out of MY MIND

MEGNAD DESAI



HOW DO you make sense of the last few months of Indian politics? The BJP having won a second and larger majority is entrenched in power. In May 2019, it looked as if it was the new Hegemon. But the BJP seems unsure of its tenure. It seems to be in a tearing hurry to act. Amit Shah said recently that the BJP had implemented 90% of its manifesto. What is left to do in the four-and-a-quarter years left?

From the moves so far which have flagged their intentions, it is possible to guess that the goal of redefining Indian citizenship is a priority. The National

# Centre can enforce its word on CAA

Register of Citizens and the National Population Register are meant to weed out people with inadequate proof of citizenship. The Citizenship (Amendment) Act will ensure that non-Muslim people with inadequate papers will be brought in as refugees. Can the government get away with it? Why ever not?

In Indian democracy, power of a government comes from the electoral success it has achieved. First past the post does not require a majority of votes, just a majority of seats. As in the United Kingdom, a party with a majority in the directly elected chamber commands legitimacy. The Rajya Sabha is more powerful than the House of Lords as it is (indirectly)

elected and not appointed.

If so, the BJP will be within its power to implement CAA/NRC as long as the Rajya Sabha acquiesces. There are no other constraints that can be put on the government. As was seen in the recent judgment on the Internet suspension in Jammu & Kashmir, fundamental rights are subject to severe limitations as per the First Amendment, which was proposed by none other than Jawaharlal Nehru within 15 months of the adoption of the Constitution. The 1949 Constitution embodied the Anglo-American set of fundamental rights. The First Amendment restored the colonial state but with *brown sahib* rulers. The Partition and fear of

Balkanisation led to a strong centralist bias, and the only way states can exert pressure on the Centre is through Rajya Sabha or street demonstrations.

The recent agitation against CAA shows this. The government has now notified the legislation so its implementation has neither been annulled nor even delayed. The government does not intend to relent. Narendra Modi said his government had not even discussed implementing NRC nationwide. He has obviously been overruled by the hard BJP core. Modi 1.0 began with Swachh Bharat. Modi 2.0 is about Swachh Bharatiyata. Since RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat has said all those living in India are Hindus, regardless of their religion, can the

Prime Minister offer an inclusive approach which will be conciliatory? Or will the hard core of the BJP shout him down once again?

The opposition parties have been caught flat-footed. It was students who led the protest. Even the recent meeting convened by Sonia Gandhi showed a divided Opposition, and a strategy based on power of chief ministers to challenge CAA rather than any mass movement.

As this is a Central subject, the Centre can enforce its word. Rushing to the Supreme Court will not help. There is no violation of the Constitution in CAA, and NRC was ordered by the Supreme Court itself for Assam.

I would be happy to be proved wrong.



## दैनिक जागरण

शांति समृद्धि की पहली शर्त है

# कश्मीरी पंडितों की उम्मीद

इससे इन्कार नहीं कि जम्मू-कश्मीर से अनुच्छेद 370 और 35-ए हटने के बाद वहां के हालात बदले हैं, लेकिन अभी और भी बदलाव लाने और साथ ही एक ऐसा माहौल कायम करने की जरूरत है जिससे कश्मीरी पंडितों की वापसी का मार्ग प्रशस्त हो सके। किसी को भी इसकी अन्वदेखी नहीं करनी चाहिए कि कश्मीरी पंडित अपने घरों को वापस लौटने की बात जोह रहे हैं। उनके निष्कासन के 30 साल बाद यह जो उम्मीद जगी है कि वे अपने घर-बार लौट सकते हैं उसे पूरा करने की जरूरत है। इस जरूरत को पूरा करने के लिए कश्मीर के लोगों को भी आगे आना चाहिए। कश्मीरी पंडितों का कश्मीर से बाहर निर्वासित जीवन जीना कश्मीरियत के लिए कलंक है। उस कश्मीरियत का कोई मतलब नहीं जिसमें कश्मीरी पंडितों के लिए कोई स्थान न हो। इस बात को कश्मीर के साथ शेष देश के लोगों को भी समझना होगा। यह अच्छा नहीं हुआ कि बीते 30 सालों में अपने ही देश में निर्वासित जीवन जी रहे कश्मीरी पंडितों की वापसी के पक्ष में वैसी आवाज नहीं उठी जैसी उठनी चाहिए थी। इससे बड़ी त्रासदी और कोई नहीं हो सकती कि कोई समुदाय अपने ही देश में शरणार्थी बनने को मजबूर हो जाए।

यह देखना दुखद है कि आज जब कश्मीरी पंडित घाटी से अपने निष्कासन के खोफनाक मंजर को बयान करने के साथ ही अपने घरों को लौटने की उम्मीद रेखांकित कर रहे हैं तब देश का राजनीतिक नेतृत्व एक स्वर से यह कहने के लिए तैयार नहीं दिखाता कि उनकी इस स्वाभाविक अपेक्षा को पूरा करने के लिए हर संभव कदम उठाए जाने चाहिए। आखिर कश्मीरी पंडितों की वापसी का अधूरा काम देश का साझा संकल्प क्यों नहीं बन सकता? जो भी हो, केंद्र सरकार को तो यह स्मरण रखना ही चाहिए कि कश्मीरी पंडितों की वापसी का उसका संकल्प अभी शेष है। इस अधूरे संकल्प का संज्ञान उन केंद्रीय मंत्रियों को भी लेना चाहिए जो जम्मू-कश्मीर के लोगों को भरोसा दिलाने और वहां की समस्याओं को जानने-समझने एवं उनका निराकरण करने के लिए वहां जा रहे हैं। केंद्रीय मंत्रियों का जम्मू-कश्मीर दौरा एक ऐसे समय हो रहा है जब वहां संचार सुविधाओं पर लगी पाबंदी में ढील देने का काम भी शुरू हो गया है। संचार सुविधाओं की पूरी तौर पर बहाली बहुत कुछ सुरक्षा के हालात पर निर्भर करेगी। जम्मू-कश्मीर और खासकर घाटी के सुरक्षा माहौल को बेहतर बनाने में एक बड़ी भूमिका वहां के आम लोगों की भी है। उन्हें इस मामले में सक्रियता दिखानी चाहिए ताकि पहले से हतोत्साहित अलगाव एवं आतंक के समर्थकों को यह समझ आए कि अब उनकी दाल गलने वाली नहीं है।

# अस्पतालों की सेहत सुधारें

बिहार के सरकारी अस्पतालों की हालत पर पटना हाईकोर्ट की चिंता को गंभीरता से लिया जाना चाहिए। कोर्ट ने यह कहा है कि बिहार में कोई भी अस्पताल उच्चस्तरीय नहीं है तो उम्मीद है कि सरकार निश्चय ही इस पहलू पर गौर करेगी। कोर्ट ने स्पष्ट रूप से कहा है कि प्रदेश में करीब 13 करोड़ लोग हैं, जिनके स्वास्थ्य के प्रति राज्य सरकार लापरवाह नहीं हो सकती। सरकारी अस्पतालों में डॉक्टरों एवं पारा मेडिकल कर्मियों की भारी कमी है। कोर्ट ने इसमें तत्काल सुधार का निर्देश दिया है। यह भी कहा है कि यदि अस्पतालों की हालात में सुधार नहीं होता है तो सरकार के अधिकारियों को बाहर जाकर इलाज कराने की अनुमति नहीं दी जानी चाहिए। कोर्ट की चेतावनी भरी इस टिप्पणी को हल्के में नहीं लिया जा सकता। सरकार को चाहिए कि वह सरकारी चिकित्सा व्यवस्था को बेहतर और सुदृढ़ बनाने की दिशा में किए जा रहे प्रयासों को अभी तेज करे। आंकड़ों के हिसाब से देखें तो राज्य में अभी पांच हजार से अधिक डॉक्टरों और दस हजार से अधिक पारा मेडिकल कर्मियों की कमी है। सबसे पहले इस कमी को दूर करने की कोशिश होनी चाहिए। साथ ही अस्पतालों में जीवन रक्षक दवाओं, चिकित्सकीय उपकरणों सहित अन्य संसाधनों की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित कराना आवश्यक है। सरकारी अस्पतालों में डॉक्टरों और चिकित्सा कर्मियों की कमी के साथ ही अन्य कई कारणों के चलते चिकित्सा व्यवस्था की हालत चिंताजनक बनी हुई है। हालांकि इसे दुरुस्त करने की दिशा में राज्य सरकार लगातार सक्रिय है और भविष्य में बेहतर व्यवस्था की उम्मीद कर सकते हैं। प्राथमिक स्वास्थ्य केंद्र से लेकर मेडिकल कॉलेजों तक की चिकित्सा व्यवस्था में सुधार सतत प्रयास से ही संभव है। इसके लिए दीर्घकालिक कार्ययोजना बनानी होगी। गरीब मरीजों के पास कोई चारा नहीं। उनके लिए सरकारी अस्पताल का ही आसरा है। वहां समुचित व्यवस्था नहीं होने के कारण दूसरे राज्यों की तुलना में बिहार में बीमारियों से मौत का आंकड़ा कुछ अधिक है। जाहिर है कि सरकारी अस्पतालों की सेहत में सुधार किए बिना स्वस्थ बिहार के सपने को साकार नहीं किया जा सकता। इस दिशा में अविलंब प्रयास अपरिहार्य हो गए हैं।

**अस्पतालों की हालत पर हाईकोर्ट की चिंता जायज है। सरकार से उम्मीद है कि वह सरकारी चिकित्सा व्यवस्था को बेहतर और सुदृढ़ बनाने के प्रयासों को और तेज करेगी।**



संजय गुप्त

**आखिर यह कितना उचित है कि जिस मसले पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट का दरवाजा खटखटाया जाए उसी को लेकर सड़कों पर भी उतर आया जाए?**

नागरिकता संशोधन कानून यानी सीएए को लेकर विपक्षी दल दिल्ली के साथ देश के विभिन्न हिस्सों में आम लोगों और खासकर मुस्लिम समुदाय को जिस तरह छल-कपट के सहारे उकसाकर सड़कों पर उतारने में लगे हुए हैं वह भारतीय राजनीति के विकृत होते जाने का ही प्रमाण है। विपक्षी दलों के इस शरारत भरे हथकंडे के बीच सरकार ने इस कानून को अधिसूचित कर अपने अडिग इरादे का परिचय दिया है। जहां सरकार अडिग है वहीं विपक्षी दल भी टकराव की राह पर बढ़ते दिख रहे हैं। केरल सरकार सुप्रीम कोर्ट पहुंच गई है और पंजाब सरकार ने विधानसभा में सीएए के खिलाफ प्रस्ताव पारित किया है। विपक्षी दलों के इस अडिगल खेये के बीच सरकार राष्ट्रीय जनसंख्या रजिस्टर तैयार करने की दिशा में बढ़ रही है। यह जनगणना के तहत एक संवैधानिक दायित्व है, फिर भी बंगाल सरकार इस प्रक्रिया में शामिल होने से इन्कार कर रही है। यह तब है जब एनपीआर तैयार करने का काम 2010 में भी हो चुका है। यह देखना दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण है कि विपक्षी दलों ने एनपीआर को लेकर भी जनमानस में भ्रम फैलाना शुरू कर दिया है। वे इस तरह की अफवाहों को हवा दे रहे हैं कि एनपीआर के बाद एनआरसी की तैयारी की जाएगी। इस तरह की झूठी अफवाहें किस सुनिश्चित तरीके से फैलाई जा रही हैं, उसका उदाहरण है दिल्ली के शाहीन बाग इलाके में एक माह से जारी

धरना। नोएडा को दिल्ली से जोड़ने वाली इस सड़क पर काबिज होकर दिए जा रहे धरने के कारण हर दिन लाखों लोग परेशान हो रहे हैं, लेकिन इस परेशानी को दरकिनार करके भीड़ को बरगलाना जा रहा है। इस काम में विपक्षी नेताओं के साथ कुछ वामपंथी एक्टिविस्ट, फिल्मकार और मीडिया के लोग भी शामिल हैं। यह देखना दुखद है कि स्वार्थी तत्वों की ओर से प्रयोजित इस धरने को जारी रखने के लिए छल-छद्म के साथ प्रलोभन का भी सहारा लिया जा रहा है। विपक्षी दल इस तरह के धरने देश के अन्य हिस्सों में भी शुरू करते दिख रहे हैं। वे ऐसा तब कर रहे जब खुद उन्होंने सीएए को सुप्रीम कोर्ट में चुनौती दी हुई है। आखिर यह कितना उचित है कि जिस मसले पर सुप्रीम कोर्ट का दरवाजा खटखटाया जाए उसी को लेकर सड़कों पर उतर जाए?

सीएए के साथ ही एनपीआर का विरोध असंवैधानिक कृत्य ही है। संसद से पारित कानून का इस तरह का विरोध संवैधानिक अराजकता को ही जन्म देगा। इस अराजकता का परिचय तब दिया जा रहा है जब नागरिकता पूरी तौर पर केंद्र सरकार के अधिकार क्षेत्र का विषय है। ऐसे विषय पर भी केंद्र सरकार को सीधी चुनौती देना सस्ती राजनीति के अलावा एनआरसी की तैयारी की जाएगी। इस तरह की झूठी अफवाहें किस सुनिश्चित तरीके से फैलाई जा रही हैं, उसका उदाहरण है दिल्ली के शाहीन बाग इलाके में एक माह से जारी



अवधेश राजगुप्त

भी नहीं भूल सकता कि 1975 में देश में किस तरह आपातकाल थोप दिया गया था, लेकिन इसके बाद भी भारतीय लोकतंत्र की मिसाल दी जाती है। अब इस मिसाल को छिन्न-भिन्न करने का काम किया जा रहा है। शर्मनाक यह है कि इसमें बंगाल, केरल के अलावा कांग्रेस शासित राज्य सरकारों भी शामिल हैं। आखिर कानून का इस तरह का विरोध संवैधानिक अराजकता को ही जन्म देगा। इस अराजकता का परिचय तब दिया जा रहा है जब नागरिकता पूरी तौर पर केंद्र सरकार के अधिकार क्षेत्र का विषय है। ऐसे विषय पर भी केंद्र सरकार को सीधी चुनौती देना सस्ती राजनीति के अलावा एनआरसी की तैयारी की जाएगी। इस तरह की झूठी अफवाहें किस सुनिश्चित तरीके से फैलाई जा रही हैं, उसका उदाहरण है दिल्ली के शाहीन बाग इलाके में एक माह से जारी

राष्ट्रीय महत्व के जरूरी कार्यों में इस तरह की अड़ोबाजी संवैधानिक तौर-तरीकों का अनारद ही नहीं, संघीय ढांचे को सीधे तौर पर दी जाने वाली चुनौती है। ममता केंद्र सरकार के प्रति अंध विरोध से इतनी अधिक ग्रस्त है कि रूप में उभर रही है। चूंकि विधानसभा की बंगाल को बाहर किए हुए हैं। वह अंध विरोध की राजनीति इसीलिए कर रही है, क्योंकि बंगाल में भाजपा एक बड़ी राजनीतिक ताकत की राजनीति को मजबूत करने में जुट गई है। वह बीते कुछ समय से बांग्लादेशी घुसपैठियों को निकालने की मांग का भी विरोध करने लगी है। एक समय वह इससे कुपित थी कि इन घुसपैठियों की पहचान कर उन्हें बंगाल राजनीति पर नए सिरे से मुह लगाई है।

केंद्र सरकार की ओर से जनसंख्या रजिस्टर और जनगणना की प्रारंभिक तैयारियों को लेकर बुलाई गई बैठक का बेहिकार करके ममता ने अपनी धुड़ता भरी राजनीति पर नए सिरे से मुह लगाई है।

# इतिहास बताने की कलाकारी

हास्य-व्यंग्य



कुछ लोग इतिहास बनाते हैं। ऐसे बड़े काम कर जाते हैं कि इतिहास आगे बढ़कर उनको और उनके काम को दर्ज करता है। वैसे यह इतिहास बनाना बड़े झंझट का काम है। उम्र लग जाती है, इतिहास बनाने में। फिर भी नहीं बना पाते। यह तो हुई इतिहास बनाने वालों की बात। इनसे इतर एक तबका है इतिहास लिखने वालों यानी इतिहासकारों का। इनका काम भी छोटा नहीं होता, बल्कि बड़ा काम है यह भी। बड़ी समझ और तटस्थता चाहिए इस काम में। अक्सर ऐसा होता नहीं। हर इतिहासकार और कथित इतिहासकार की अपनी दृष्टि होती है। दृष्टि-दोष होते हैं। अलग-अलग चश्मे होते हैं। खेमे होते हैं, दरबार होते हैं, मालिक होते हैं, लागू होते हैं, पहिये होते हैं, गड्ढे होते हैं, अपने चुने और बुने रास्ते होते हैं और स्वार्थ तो होते ही हैं। ये कलमें चुन-चुनकर इतिहास के अपने ही पन्ने तैयार करती हैं। इस तरह, इतिहास की अधिकांश पुस्तकें बस चुनी और गढ़ी हुई स्मृतियों तथा चुनी हुई विस्मृतियों का चालाक पोथा बनकर रह जाती हैं। इतिहास अक्सर भ्रम पैदा करता है। वहीं घटना कई पौधाओं में मिलती है। इतिहास में सब होता है। थोपी हुई कथाएँ, रचे गए प्रसंग, सुनी-सुनाई बातें, कहां इतिहास है और कहां मात्र एक विशुद्ध किस्सा, पता ही नहीं चलता। सी इतिहासकार का काम इतिहास बनाने वालों जैसा कठिन न भी हो, पर है कठिन भी और बड़ी जिम्मेदारी का भी। फिलसलन भरा रास्ता है इतिहास लेखन। इतिहास



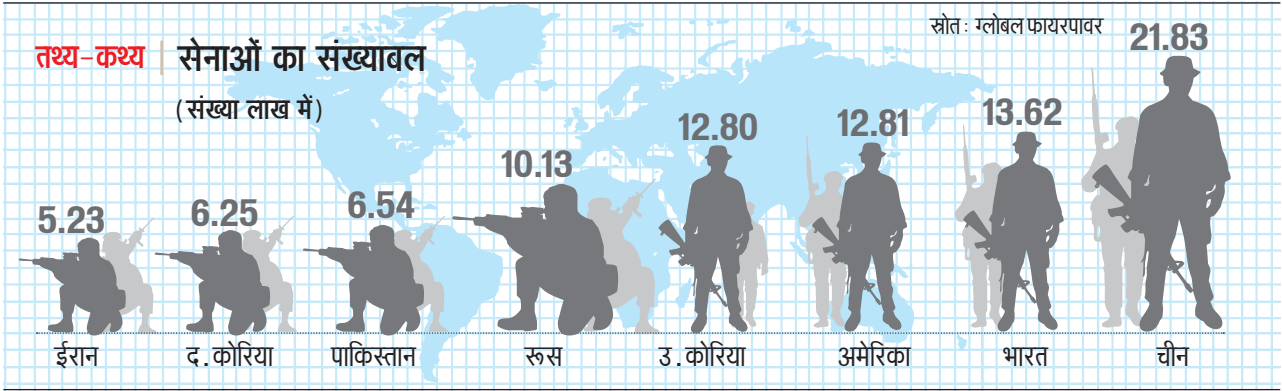
ज्ञान चतुर्वेदी

**इतिहास में जो भी लिखा है, लिखा रहे पर हम तुमसे कह रहे हैं न? बस, वही सुनो और समझो**

में गलत के दर्ज हो जाने और सही के छूट जाने के खतरे बहुत बड़े हैं। बार-बार यह हुआ भी है। होता ही है। गलत इतिहास पढ़कर और पढ़कर पीढियों को बरगलाना जा सकता है। इतिहासकार यदि दरबारी किस्म का हो तो वह इतिहास की कलाई को इतना मोड़ सकता है कि पढ़ने वाले की समझ पर नील पड़ जाए। बहस के लिए बड़ा मुफीद है ऐसा इतिहास लेखन। अब जाकर हमें पता चला कि इतिहास का एक और कोण भी हो सकता है। हाल के चर्चों में इतिहास में लिखे को लेकर देश में इतनी खींचतान मची है कि पुस्तक पुर्जे-पुर्जे हो गई हैं। सही पन्ने हवा में उड़ा दिए गए हैं। चुनाव सभाओं में, मीडिया की बहसों में, तू-तू-मैं-मैं में, वॉट्सएप और फेसबुक आदि के अहटारों में जारी प्रवचनों तथा गाली-गलौज में। इधर हमने इतिहास को एक साथ ही बहस, लात-घूंसे, मुंहजोरी और बरगलाने के काम पर लगा दिया है। हमें यह भी पता चला है कि यदि इतिहास को तिरछा

करके, उल्टा करके, सही स्थानों पर उसे ढांक कर, गलत जगहों पर उसे मनचाहा उजागर करके और उसमें अपने कारिदों से लिखवाए गए जाली पन्ने जोड़कर, सही मजमें में, पूरी बाजीगरी और हथ तथा गले की सफाई के साथ यदि तमाशे की तरह पेश किया जाए तो सारे तमाशे के बंद लोगों के बीच झोली घुमाकर वोट मांगे जा सकते हैं। वैसे इतिहास के गड़े मुर्दों में जान फूँककर उन्हें खड़ा कर देना इतना आसान होता भी नहीं है। तमाशा खड़ा करने की अपनी शर्तें होती हैं। सामान लगता है, कलाकारी लगती है, बेशर्मी लगती है और एक किस्म की हठधर्मी भी चाहिए यह सब करने के लिए। बहुत सा झूट लगता है। लिखाए-पढ़ाए बंदर-बंदरिया लगते हैं। इतिहास से वर्तमान को बरगलाना जा सकता है। इतिहास को लेकर ठीक सा खेल पेश करें तो भीड़ आती तो है। इतिहास का यह इस्तेमाल नया है भी, नहीं भी है। सदियों से सत्ता ने अपनी सुविधानुसार इतिहास बनवाए हैं, पर अब तो उसकी भी जरूरत महसूस नहीं की जा रही। इतिहास में जो भी लिखा है, लिखा रहे पर हम तुमसे कह रहे हैं न? बस, वह सुनो। इतिहास के पन्ने चबाने और गुटकने के पश्चात उन्हीं की अपनी लड़ी बनाकर मुंह से निकालने वाले बाजीगरों का मजमा है अब राजनीति। इतिहास के पन्नों में बांधकर जहर की पुडिया को भी अमृत बताकर बेचा जा सकता है। यह कला भी अब राजनीतिशास्त्र का अहम हिस्सा बन गई है। भगवान हमारे इतिहास की रक्षा करें और भविष्य की भी।

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# मिला पृथ्वी का सबसे प्राचीन तत्व

मुकुल व्यास

वैज्ञानिकों ने पृथ्वी पर सबसे प्राचीन पदार्थ की पहचान की है। यह तारे की धूल है जो सात अरब वर्ष पुरानी है। यह धूल करीब पचास वर्ष पहले एक विशाल चट्टानी उल्कापिंड के जरिये पृथ्वी पर पहुंची थी। यह धूल जिन कणों से बनी है वे हमारे सूरज से भी पुराने हैं। मरगानासन तारों ने अपने जीवन के अंतिम चरणों में इन धूल कणों को हमारे ब्रह्मांड में बिखेर दिया था। इनमें से कुछ धूल कण एक क्षुद्रग्रह पर जम गए जिसने मर्चिसन उल्कापिंड उत्पन्न किया। यह चट्टान 28 सितंबर, 1969 को ऑस्ट्रेलिया में मर्चिसन के निकट गिरी थी। इसका वजन 100 किलो था। मर्चिसन उल्कापिंड से निकाले गए दर्जनों सूर्य-पूर्व कणों के नए विश्लेषण से पता चला कि ये कण हमारे सूरज से करीब 40 लाख से लेकर 3 अरब वर्ष पुराने हैं। हमारे सूरज का निर्माण करीब 4.6 अरब वर्ष पहले हुआ था। हमारे ब्रह्मांड में धूल कणों की भरमार है, लेकिन अभी तक पृथ्वी की चट्टानों में कोई सूर्य-पूर्व कण नहीं मिले हैं। इस अध्ययन के प्रमुख लेखक फिलिप हैक के अनुसार इसका

**जब तारे का जन्म होता है तब वह धूल का उत्पादन नहीं करता। तारे अपने जीवन के अंत में ही धूल उत्पन्न करते हैं**

कारण यह है कि प्लेट टेक्टॉनिक्स (धरती के नीचे चट्टानों की हलचल), ज्वालामुखीय गतिविधियों और अन्य भौगोलिक प्रक्रियाओं ने उन सभी सूर्य-पूर्व धूल कणों को गर्म करके परिवर्तित कर दिया होगा जो पृथ्वी के निर्माण के दौरान जमा हुए होंगे। क्षुद्रग्रहों से निकलने वाली बड़ी चट्टानें भी प्राचीन अंतर-नक्षत्रीय धूल कणों को ग्रहण कर सकती हैं। मर्चिसन उल्कापिंड का मूल क्षुद्रग्रह गैसों के बादल (सोलर नेब्यूला) से उत्पन्न हुआ था। यह एक स्थिर चट्टान है जिसमें कोई परिवर्तन नहीं हुआ है। अतः सूर्य-पूर्व कण भी किसी और पदार्थ में तब्दील हुए हैं। अधिकांश सूर्य-पूर्व कणों की लंबाई एक माइक्रोन या उससे कम होती है, लेकिन वैज्ञानिकों ने अध्ययन के लिए जिन कणों को चुना उनकी लंबाई 2 से 30 माइक्रोन के बीच

थी। इन कणों को ऑप्टिकल माइक्रोस्कोप से देखा जा सकता है। शोध में एक डेटिंग तकनीक का इस्तेमाल किया जिसने अंतरिक्ष में कणों की अरबों वर्षों की अंतर-नक्षत्रीय यात्रा के दौरान उन पर ब्रह्मांडीय किरणों के प्रभावों की नाप जोखी है। अत्यधिक ऊर्जा वाले कण विभिन्न स्रोतों से उत्पन्न होते हैं और ये ठोस पदार्थों पर प्रहार करते हैं और उनमें प्रविष्ट हो जाते हैं। ये किरणें खगोलीय चट्टान के साथ क्रिया करके नए तत्व बनाती हैं। सूर्य-पूर्व कणों में विभिन्न तत्वों की मात्रा नाप कर यह अनुमान लग सकता है कि यह धूल कबसे ब्रह्मांडीय किरणों में नह रही है। करीब 60 प्रतिशत कण करीब 4.6 अरब से लेकर 4.9 अरब वर्ष पुराने हैं। इस उम्र के अधिकांश कणों की मौजूदगी का एक बड़ा कारण यह हो सकता है कि करीब 7 अरब वर्ष पहले हमारी आकाशगंगा में तारों का जन्म हुआ था। ये तारे करीब दो से ढाई अरब वर्ष बाद धूल उत्पन्न करने लायक हुए। जब तारे का जन्म होता है तब वह धूल का उत्पादन नहीं करता। तारे अपने जीवनकाल के अंत में ही धूल उत्पन्न करते हैं। (लेखक विज्ञान के जानकार हैं)

पद की लालसा

भाजपा में नए अध्यक्ष का चुनाव अगले सप्ताह होने वाला है, लेकिन चर्चा नए अध्यक्ष को लेकर नहीं, बल्कि संगठन पदाधिकारियों को लेकर शुरू हो गई है। दरअसल यह पहले से ही तय है कि अध्यक्ष कौन बनेगा। नए अध्यक्ष के साथ ही संगठन में फेरबदल और विस्तार को लेकर संभावनाएँ हैं। दरअसल अमित शाह ने अपने लंबे कार्यकाल में बहुत ज्यादा विस्तार नहीं किया था। महासचिव पद संभलते पदों पर रिक्रियतियाँ थीं। पिछले दिनों में संसदीय बोर्ड में भी कई रिक्रियतियाँ हो गई हैं। जाहिर है कि जो पहले ही मंत्री या दूसरे महत्वपूर्ण पदों पर हैं उनके अंदर संसदीय बोर्ड में स्थान पाने की लालसा है जो पार्टी की शीर्ष निर्णायक कमेटी है। तो ऐसे कई लोग हैं जो दूसरे पद या फिर संगठन में प्रवेश को लेकर लालायित हैं। यह आशा संजोए बैठे हैं कि जेपी नूडल के अध्यक्ष बनने के बाद सभी पदों पर रिक्रियतियाँ भरी जाएंगी और ऐसे में उनकी लाटरी निकल सकती है।

करामाती नेम-प्लेट

मंत्री जी के दफ्तर का रिनोवेशन हुआ और क्या रिनोवेशन हुआ। जिसने भी देखा तरीफ की। एक-एक आइटम मंत्री जी की पसंद का। उद्घाटन का दिन आया। मंत्री जी बेहद उत्साहित। दल-बल के साथ पहुंचे, लेकिन ये क्या। सब कुछ नया, लेकिन नेम प्लेट गायब। यह कैसा हो गया?

राजंरग

तुरंत पूछताछ हुई तो पता लगा कि आसपास के लोगों को कुछ मालूम नहीं। खास किस्म का नेम प्लेट बनवाया गया था जो गायब हो गया। कुछ ही देर में एक दूसरे सहयोगी नेम प्लेट पड़ताल के आधार पर बताया, नेम प्लेट जिस दरवाजे पर लगी थी वह दरवाजा ही रिनोवेशन करने वाली कंपनी ले गई है। सबने राहत की सांस ली। कंपनी ने सीधा जब सब बदला जा रहा है तो नेम प्लेट भी बदली जाएगी। उसे बताया गया जल्द से जल्द नेम प्लेट वापस करो, वह कोई ऐसी वैसी नेम प्लेट नहीं है। कुछ दिनों बाद नेम प्लेट वापस आ गई।

रेलवे में बेचनी

रोज नए-नए आदेशों और निर्देशों से हलकान रेलवे के कर्मचारी इन दिनों एक नई मुसीबत को लेकर बेचैन हैं। ये बेचनी रेलवे बोर्ड के उस आदेश से पैदा हुई है जिसमें सभी जॉन, मंडल और उत्पादन इकाइयों से जुड़े तमाम दफ्तरों में सीसीटीवी कैमरे लगाने को कहा गया है। ये कैमरे आइपी बेस्ट होंगे, जिनमें चेहरे के भाव और हरकतों से व्यक्ति के इरादों की पहचान हो सकती है। आगामी 31 सितंबर तक पूरा होने वाले इस प्रोजेक्ट के तहत लाखों की संख्या में आइपी बेस्ट सीसीटीवी कैमरों की खरीद की जानी है। रेलवे कर्मचारियों को डर है कि इन कैमरों से उनकी आजादी छिन जाएगी और कार्यालयों में कर्मचारी माहौल रोबोटिक हो जाएगा। अभी कार्यालयों में कर्मचारी हल्की-फुल्की गप्पट के साथ मस्ती में काम करते हैं। कैमरे लगने के बाद अफसर उन्हें छोटी-छोटी बातों के लिए प्रताड़ित कर सकते हैं। दूसरी ओर रेलवे बोर्ड के

अफसरों का कहना है कि कैमरे लगने से कार्यालयों में अवांछित लोगों की घुसपैट रुकने के साथ भ्रष्टाचार पर अंकुश लगेगा, लेकिन ये बात कर्मचारियों को हजम नहीं हो रही है।

**साहब की हसरत**

कृषि मंत्रालय के आला अफसर की हसरत पूरी हो या न हो, लेकिन इसे लेकर मंत्रालय के बाकी अफसरों में अटकलबाजियाँ खूब लगाई जा रही हैं। साहब की नजर अपने राज्य के चीफ सैक्रेटरी पद पर थी, लेकिन उसे ऐसी नजर लगी कि साहब की सिट्टी पिट्टी गुम हो गई। वैसे तो साहब बेहद शरीफ और सज्जन श्रेणी वाले अफसरों में गिने जाते हैं, लेकिन जिस राज्य से वह आते हैं वहां के लोगों की क्या कहे? उन्हें सड़क अवरूद्ध के घेर में खड़ा कर दिया। बस फिर क्या था, उनके प्रतिद्वंद्वियों को मौका लग गया और साहब को दौड़ से बाहर कर दिया। राजनीतिक लोगों के आसपास रहने वाले अफसर राजनीति के पक्के खिलाड़ी हो जाते हैं, लेकिन बड़े साहब इसमें मात खा गए। इसीलिए उनके पीछे खड़े अफसर अब उन्हें ही चिढ़ाने से बाज नहीं आ रहे हैं। रैस में पिछड़े साहब अब मन मसोस कर रही, खरीफ और जायद की तैयारी पर लगे हुए हैं।





## दूसरी नजर

- पी चिदंबरम**

चार अगस्त, 2019 को कश्मीर बंद कर दिया गया था। उस रात से ही मानवाधिकारों पर हमले शुरू हो गए थे। राज्यपाल, सलाहकार, मुख्य सचिव, पुलिस महानिदेशक आदि की नई टीम ने कमान संभाल ली थी। इस टीम में भारत के संविधान के प्रति थोड़ा भी सम्मान नहीं रह गया था।

चार अगस्त, 2019 को कश्मीर घाटी में मोबाइल फोन नेटवर्क, इंटरनेट सेवाएं और लैंडलाइन फोन सेवाएं बंद कर दी गई थीं। आवाजाही पर प्रतिबंध लगा दिए गए थे। पांच अगस्त, 2019 को राष्ट्रपति ने संवैधानिक आदेश 272 जारी कर जम्मू–कश्मीर के विशेष दर्जे को खत्म कर दिया था और प्रस्तावित केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों पर भारत के संविधान के सभी प्रावधानों को लागू कर दिया था। उसी दिन जिला मजिस्ट्रेटों ने धारा 144 लगा दी थी और लोगों को आवाजाही व जमा होने पर रोक लगा दी थी। सैकड़ों राजनीतिक नेताओं और कार्यकर्ताओं को हिरासत में ले लिया गया था। तीन पूर्व मुख्यमंत्रियों को बिना आरोप के नजरबंद कर दिया था, जो अभी भी हिरासत में हैं।

कश्मीर टाइम्स की कार्यकारी संपादक अनुराधा भसीन, सांसद गुलाम नबी आजाद और अन्य ने इन प्रतिबंधों को सुप्रीम कोर्ट में चुनौती दी थी। इस दावे के अलावा कि याचिकाकर्ताओं के मौलिक अधिकारों का हनन हुआ है, सुश्री भसीन ने यह दावा भी किया था कि वे अपना अखबार भी नहीं निकाल पा रही थीं, इससे प्रेस की आजादी का हनन हुआ था।

सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने 16 सितंबर, 2019 को राज्य सरकार को आदेश दिया था कि ‘राष्ट्रीय हित और आंतरिक सुरक्षा को ध्यान में रखते हुए ऐसे सभी कदम उठाए जाएं जो कश्मीर में सामान्य जनजीवन की बहाली सुनिश्चित करें।’ जैसी कि आशंका थी, सामान्य जनजीवन की बहाली नहीं हो पाई। दस अक्टूबर, 2019 को अदालत ने केंद्र सरकार का यह जवाब स्वीकार किया कि कुछ प्रतिबंधों में ‘ढील दी गई है’। हालांकि, प्रभावी रूप से ऐसा कोई अंतरिम आदेश नहीं था, जिसका पालन करने के लिए केंद्र और राज्य

# जंगल सहेजने की जरूरत

संजय कुमार सिंह

बढ़ती आबादी के लिए जंगल काटना जरूरी है, पर हम कट रहे वन के बराबर पेड़ नहीं लगा पाते हैं। इसके चलते पर्यावरण असंतुलन का असर जगजाहिर है। ऐसे में वनों का जलना रोकना जरूरी है। पर हम इस ओर भी आवश्यक कार्रवाई नहीं कर पा रहे हैं। जंगल में आग की खबरें आम हो गई हैं। इसका कारण यही है कि हम कंक्र्रीट के जंगल में तो आग बुझाने की आवश्यक व्यवस्था करते हैं, पर जंगल को प्रकृति के भरोसे छोड़ दे रहे हैं। जंगल काट कर संतुलन हम बिगाड़ते हैं तो उसे बनाना भी हमारा काम है। अगर हम समझ रहे थे कि प्रकृति उसे संभाल लेगी, तो अब यह स्पष्ट हो चुका है कि ऐसा हो नहीं रहा है। जंगल में आग से पेड़-पौधे ही नष्ट नहीं होते हैं तमाम किस्म के जंगली जानवरों की मौत हो जाती है और जो बच जाते हैं उनके लिए भी रहने का संकट पैदा हो जाता है।

आबादी को जंगल की जरूरत कई कारणों से है, पर जंगल की जरूरत आदमी को अदमी की जरूरत नहीं है। पर जंगल में आग रोकने के पर्याप्त उपाय हमारे पास नहीं हैं। जंगल में आग लगने की समस्या किसी एक देश में नहीं है और न ही इसका असर उसी देश में महसूस किया जाता है।

जंगल में आग की जो घटनाएं हाल के समय में चर्चा में रही हैं उनमें अमेजन के जंगलों के साथ ऑस्ट्रेलिया के जंगल की आग महत्त्वपूर्ण है। हमारे देश में भी जंगलों में आग लगती रहती है। आज आवश्यकता है कि आग लगे ही नहीं और अगर लग जाए तो तुरंत उस पर काबू पाया जा सके। एक बार जंगल में किसी कारण से आग लग जाए तो वह फैलती ही रहती है। खुद नियंत्रित होने का कोई उपाय नहीं है और बाहर से लोगों का नियंत्रित कर पाना काफी मुश्किल है।

जंगल के कुछ हिस्सों से पेड़-पौधे काट कर अगर एक जंगल को कई हिस्से में बांट दिया जाए तो आग लगने पर वह अनिश्चित काल तक नहीं बढ़ती रहेगी और एक हिस्से के खत्म होने के बाद उसका फैलना अपने आप रुक जाएगा। लकड़ी की आवश्यकता पूरी भरने के लिए पेड़ कटते ही हैं। अगर पेड़ काटने में इस बात का खयाल रखा जाए कि उन्हें अलग हिस्सों में बांट दिया जाए तो आग बेरोक-टोक नहीं फैल पाएगी। इसके लिए जंगल या पेड़ों के बीच बहते ज्यादा अंतर बनाने की जरूरत नहीं है, बहुत कि जहां थोड़ा-बहुत अंतर है उसे बढ़ा दिया जाए तो कम समय और खर्च में अच्छा असर देखा जा सकता है।

निश्चित रूप से यह काम योजना बना कर करना होगा और इसके लिए पहले शुरुआती तैयारी करनी होगी। अब जब झोन कैमरों से लेकर गूगल मैप जैसी तकनीक उपलब्ध है, तो यह काम काफी आसान हो गया है और पहले के मुकाबले कम समय, खर्च और तैयारी के किया जा सकता है। संबंधित योजना बनाना और तैयारी करना भी पहले के मुकाबले अब काफी आसान है। बेशक इसके लिए भिन्न विभागों और तकनीक के जानकार लोगों को बैठ कर सोचने की जरूरत है। अकले भारत में नियंत्रण की दृष्टि से वनों को सरकारी स्तर पर तीन भाग में बांटा गया है। एक पुराने आंकड़े के अनुसार देश में सुरक्षित वन भौगोलिक क्षेत्र का 24.16 प्रतिशत और रक्षित वन भौगोलिक क्षेत्र का 21.34 प्रतिशत हैं। इसके अलावा अन्य वन हैं। पेड़-पौधे और मौसम के आधार पर भी वनों के कई प्रकार हैं। पर आग लगने से बचाने के लिए इन्हें एक खास तरह से बांटने की जरूरत है और यह काम सभी बंटे हुए वनों में होना चाहिए। जहां जो उपाय

असरकारक हो वही किया जाए, पर जरूरी हो तो जरूर किया जाए।

स्वस्थ पर्यावरण और पारिस्थितिकी के संतुलन के लिए किसी भी भू-भाग का एक तिहाई वनों से ढंका रहना चाहिए। भारत में वनाच्छादित क्षेत्र लगभग 748 लाख हेक्टेयर है और यह देश के कुल भौगोलिक क्षेत्रफल का 27.7 प्रतिशत है। यानी औसतन देश में एक तिहाई जंगल नहीं है। भारत में जैसे बड़े भू-भाग वाले देश में इसका ज्यादातर असर यहीं महसूस किया जाएगा, पर ऐसा नहीं है कि दुनिया के दूसरे क्षेत्रों में वनों के नुकसान से भारत अछूता रहेगा। भारत में सबसे ज्यादा कि म्यांमा में वनाच्छादित क्षेत्र अड़सठ प्रतिशत, जापान में बासठ प्रतिशत, स्वीडन में साढ़े पचपन प्रतिशत तथा संयुक्त राज्य अमेरिका में नैतीस प्रतिशत है। भारत में सबसे ज्यादा सतासी प्रतिशत वन अरुणाचल प्रदेश में है, जबकि झारखंड या छोटानागपुर में यह सत्रह प्रतिशत है। राजस्थान में चार प्रतिशत तथा

हरियाणा और पंजाब में मात्र दो प्रतिशत क्षेत्र में जंगल हैं।

इधर के दिनों में ग्लोबल वार्मिंग, ग्रीन हाउस गैस, बारिश न होने जैसे कारणों से जंगल में आग के लिए अनुकूल स्थिति बनती है। आग लगने की घटनाओं में वृद्धि हुई है। जंगल की आग और आग से पैदा

होने वाला धुआं तथा अंत में बचने वाली राख उस स्थान की पारिस्थितिकी में बड़ा बदलाव लाते हैं। जंगल नष्ट होने से उन पर निर्भर जीवों की प्रजातियां नष्ट और विलुप्त हो जाती हैं। इस कारण कहीं-कहीं जंगल में आग लगने से जमीन की उर्वरा शक्ति खत्म होना और इस कारण उसका रेगिस्तान बनना संभव है।

ऑस्ट्रेलिया के जंगलों में लगी आग का असर ऑस्ट्रेलियाई ओपन की तैयारियों पर पड़ा। एक क्वालीफायर सांस लेने में तकलीफ के कारण रिटायर हो गई, जबकि मियामी में रहने वाली कनाडा की टेनिस खिलाड़ी यूजीनी ब्यूर्चर्ड को चिकित्सा सहायता लेनी पड़ी। मैलबर्न में हवा की गुणवत्ता बेहद खराब है और अगर प्रभावान न इसे खतरनाक करार दिया है। इन हालात में साल के पहले ग्रैंडस्लैम के क्वालीफाईंग मुकाबले देर से शुरू हुए। स्लोवेनिया की डालिना जाकुपोविच को विक्टोरलैंड की स्टेफानी वोएजेच के खिलाफ मैच में बार-बार खांसी आने के बाद पीछे हटना पड़ा। मारिया शापोवा को भी एक नुमाइशी मैच में बार-बार खांसी के कारण छुट्टी लेनी पड़ी। ऑस्ट्रेलिया के जंगलों में लगी भीषण आग में जो मारे गए और जो नुकसान हुआ वह अलग है।

ऐसी हालत में सिडनी से आई आग बुझाने से संबंधित एक खबर का यह अंश गौरतलब है, ‘ ऑस्ट्रेलिया के जंगलों में लगी भीषण आग को नियंत्रित करने के काम में जुटे दमकल कर्मियों ने बताया कि सोमवार को उस पर काफी हद तक काबू पाया गया। यहाँ बारिश होने की संभावना है, जिससे उम्मीद की जा सकती है कि जंगल की आग से बरबाद हुए ग्रामीण इलाकों को कुछ राहत जरूर मिलेगी। ऑस्ट्रेलिया के जंगलों में लगी आग बुझाने के लिए दुनिया भर में प्रार्थना भी की जा रही है।’ इससे पता चलता है कि आग बुझाने में लगे दमकलकर्मी वही हैं, जो शहरों-मोहल्लों में यह काम करते हैं। यानी वहां भी जंगल में आग बुझाने वालों की कोई विशेष टीम नहीं है। आज जब ग्लोबल वार्मिंग कम करने के लिए कार्बन उत्सर्जन घटाने की बात हो रही है, तो ऑक्सीजन छोड़ने वाले पेड़ों का महत्त्व अस्दिग्ध है। दिल्ली में अगर वायु प्रदूषण का कारण पंजाब के खेतों में पराली जलाना है, तो जंगल जलने से निकलने वाले धुंए के नुकसान का अनुमान लगाया जा सकता है।

# कानून और हकीकत

सरकारें बाध्य होतीं और जम्मू-कश्मीर में हालात, खासतौर से कश्मीर घाटी में वैसे ही बने हुए हैं।
**मुद्दे और जवाब**
कई दिन तक मामलों पर सुनवाई हुई, 27 नवंबर, 2019 को फैसला सुरक्षित रख लिया गया था और दस जनवरी, 2020 को सुनाया गया। अदालत ने पांच मुद्दे लिए थे। मैं हर मुद्दे और अदालत द्वारा दिए गए जवाब को यहाँ रख रहा हूँ-
1- क्या सरकार अपराधिक दंड संहिता की धारा 144 के तहत आदेशों को जारी करने से छूट का दावा कर सकती है? जवाब- नहीं।
2- क्या अभिव्यक्ति की स्वतंत्रता और इंटरनेट पर कारोबार जारी रखने की स्वतंत्रता मौलिक अधिकार हैं? जवाब- हाँ, अनुच्छेद 19(1)(ए) और (जी) के तहत, और इंटरनेट सेवा बंद करने वाले हर आदेश की सात दिन में समीक्षा की जाएगी ( और हर पिछली समीक्षा के बाद सात दिन के अंतराल पर यह होगा)।
3- क्या इंटरनेट तक पहुंच मौलिक अधिकार है? जवाब नहीं दिया गया।
4- क्या धारा 144 के तहत लगाए गए प्रतिबंध वैध थे? जवाब- यह कहने के बाद कि अधिकार सुरक्षात्मक और उपचारात्मक है, आदेश को अनुपातिकता के सिद्धांत पर अधिकारों और प्रतिबंधों में संतुलन बनाना चाहिए, और बार-बार एक ही आदेश नहीं दिया जा सकता। अदालत ने राज्य / अधिकारियों को निर्देश दिया कि आदेशों को जारी रखने की जरूरत की तुरंत समीक्षा करें।
5- क्या प्रेस की आजादी का उल्लंघन हुआ है? जवाब- ‘जोरदार प्रभाव’ के सिद्धांत के परीक्षण और इस तथ्य कि अखबार का प्रकाशन फिर से शुरू हो गया था, अदालत ने कहा- हम इस मामले में इससे और ज्यादा कुछ कहना उचित नहीं समझते कि जिम्मेदार सरकारों को हमेशा प्रेस की आजादी का सम्मान करने की जरूरत है।

### संतुलन बनाना

अदालत के निष्कर्ष और कुछ मुद्दों पर निष्कर्ष देने में अनिच्छा, चौंकाने वाले नहीं थे। फैसले के शुरू में ही अदालत ने अपना रुख साफ करते हुए कह दिया था कि हमारा सीमित दायरा आजादी

पहले सुनिश्च मेघना की कहानी। मेघना का जन्म मुंबई के एक फुटपाथ पर हुआ था और कोई आठ साल की थी जब मेरी उससे और उसकी छोटी बहन रज्यलक्ष्मी से मुलाकात हुई। उनकी मां कूड़ा बीना करती थी दिन भर और रात को शराब के नशे में धुत रहा करती थी। होश में जब होती थी तो मुझसे मिन्नतें किया करती थी अपनी बच्चियों को बचाने के लिए। सो, मैंने अपने एक पारसी दोस्त की मदद से दोनों को एक अच्छे प्राईवेट बाल भवन में जगह ढूंढ कर दाखिल करवाया। अब मेघना अठारह साल की हो गई है और एक सरकारी हॉस्टल में रहती है। पिछले हफ्ते उसने मुझे फोन करके पूछा कि क्या उसको नौकरी दिलवाने में मदद कर सकती हूं। मैंने जब पूछा कि कैसी नौकरी करना चाहती है, तो उसने कहा, ‘मैंने फैशन डिजाइनिंग का कोर्स किया है तो फ्रैंशन लाइन में जाना चाहती हू। किसी बुटीक में क्या नौकरी दिलवा सकती हैं आप?’ बहुत दुख के साथ मुझे कहना पड़ा कि मंदा इतनी चल रही है कि नौकरियां ढूंढ़ना बहुत मुश्किल है।

जहां जाती हूं इन दिनों, मुझे मिलते हैं मेघना जैसे युवा भारतीय, जो अक्सर मेरी मदद मांगते हैं नौकरी ढूंढ़ने के लिए। ये नौजवान भारतीय शिक्षित हैं, इनके पास सेलफोन होते हैं और इनका लिबास परिचमी होता है। इनके माता-पिता जब इनकी उम्र के थे तो काफी होता था उनके लिए किसी अमीर घर में आया या कुक का काम करना। उनके बच्चों के सपने, उनकी आकांक्षाएं और हैं। इसलिए मुझे आश्चर्य हुआ पिछले सप्ताह, जब दुनिया का सबसे अमीर व्यक्ति भारत आया और उसका स्वागत करने के बदले उसको जलील किया भारत के व्यापार मंत्री और भारतीय जनता पार्टी के एक अधिकारी ने।

जब अमेजन के मालिक ने कहा कि उनका इरादा है भारत में इस साल एक अरब डॉलर का निवेश करने का, तो पीपूष गोयल ने टीवी पर जवाब दिया कि ऐसा करके जेफ बेजोस कोई ‘अहसान’ नहीं कर रहा है भारत पर। बेजोस ने अपने देश की प्रशंसा करने की कोशिश की यह कह कर कि उनकी राय में इक्कीसवीं सदी भारत की सही होगी, तो भाजपा के एक अधिकारी ने टवीट करके कहा- ‘यह बात

आप अपने मुलाजिमों को कहो जो मोदी सरकार के बारे में गलत खबरें छापते रहते हैं।’ बेजोस वॉशिंगटन पोस्ट अखबार के भी मालिक हैं। लगता है कि मोदी सरकार आदी हो गई है अपने देश के आला पत्रकारों से अपनी तारीफ सुनने की। और सच यह भी है कि मेरे कई पत्रकार बंधु उनकी तारीफ करते नहीं थकते हैं। यही कारण है शायद कि



## वक्त की नब्ब

- तवलीन सिंह**

नरेंद्र मोदी से हम जैसां ने उम्मीद रखी थी कि वह इस तरह की गलत समाजवादी नीतियों को कूड़ेदान में फेंक कर एक नया आर्थिक रास्ता ढूंढेंगे। अब भी वक्त है मोदीजी चल पड़िए उस नए रास्ते पर जिसका सपना आपने दिखाया था।

टीवी चर्चाएं ज्यादातर राजनीतिक और राष्ट्रवादी मुद्दों पर होती हैं, आर्थिक मुद्दों पर बहुत कम।

देश का आर्थिक हाल अब इतना बुरा है कि कुछ अर्थशास्त्री कहने लगे हैं कि भारत की अर्थव्यवस्था अब आइसीयू में पहुंच गई है। मोदी का एजेंडा दुबारा प्रधानमंत्री बन जाने के बाद ज्यादातर राजनीतिक रहा है, सो बड़े-बड़े कदम उठाए गए हैं राजनीतिक तौर पर। अनुच्छेद 370 को हटा दिया गया है और नागरिकता कानून में संशोधन ऐसा लाया गया है, जिसने आम नागरिकों को सड़कों पर ला दिया है। विरोध इस संशोधन का शुरू हुआ था विश्वविद्यालयों में और शुरू में शायद सिर्फ इस संशोधन का विरोध था, लेकिन अब अगर ध्यान आकर्षित करने की तकलीफ करेंगे प्रधानमंत्री तो शायद उनको दिखेगा के देश के नौजवान माधूस हैं हर तरह से। इस माधूसी को दूर करने का एक ही रास्ता है और वह है अर्थव्यवस्था को आइसीयू

# आइए, जल्लाद जल्लाद खेलें

इस लंगड़े शेर को सुनते ही रिपोर्टर हिल जाते हैं और पूछने लग जाते हैं कि शेर में यह ‘कातिल’ कौन है?

एक एंकर ‘कातिल कौन है’ को लेकर देर तक बहस कराता नजर आता है और दूसरे चैनल में एक पैनिलस्ट कहता है कि यह भी फैज का शेर है!

हाय! न रदीफ लगा, न कहीं काफिए का होश, न कहीं तान न कोई तुक और भक्त ने उसे फेज के नाम कर दिया! भइए, जब इतना किया था तो इस शेर का अता-पता भी दे दिए होते!



कई चैनल अपने रिपोर्टरों से शाहीनबाग को लाइव कवर कराते हैं और वे बैठी हुई औरतों की हिम्मत पर मुग्ध होकर उनकी विरोधमुद्रा का गुणानुवाद करने में लगे रहते हैं।

लेकिन विघ्नसंतोषियों को चैन कहां? जल्द ही वे शाहीनबाग जैसी क्रांतिकारी ‘नई साइट’ की धज बिगाड़ने में जुट गए।

एक चैनल बताया है कि ऐसा आरोप है कि शाहीनबाग का ‘प्रोटेस्ट’ एक ‘फेड प्रोटेस्ट’ है। धरने में बैठने वाली हर औरत को रोज के पांच सौ, सात सौ रुपए मिल रहे हैं। यहां सब कुछ है। बिरयानी भी है। चाय-नाश्ता भी है। ये सब क्या यों ही हो गया है?

एक शाम एक अंग्रेजी रिपोर्टर दिल्ली की जामा मस्जिद की सीढ़ियों पर ही विरोध बनाने और बताने में ‘बिजी’ हो जाती है।

और सुरक्षा संबंधी चिंताओं के बीच संतुलन कायम करने को लेकर है..... हम यहाँ सिर्फ यह सुनिश्चित करने के लिए हैं कि सुरक्षा सुनिश्चित करने के साथ ही मौजूदा हालात में नागरिकों को सारे अधिकार दिए जाएं।

4 अगस्त 2019 से 13 जनवरी 2020 के दौरान जब सरकार ने तथाकथित ‘सामान्य स्थिति’ बनाए रखी, बीस नागरिक और छत्तीस उग्रवादी मारे गए और आठ सुरक्षाकर्मी शहीद हो गए।

जब आप इस कॉलम को पढ़ रहे होंगे, इंटरनेट, आवाजाही, लोगों के जमा होने, राजनीतिक गतिविधियों, बोलने-लिखने और कश्मीर आने वालों पर पाबंदी जारी रहेगी। बिना आरोपों के राजनीतिक नेता हिरासत में बने रहेंगे। तो क्या फिर फैसले के बाद वाकई स्थिति में कोई सुधार आया है?

बेजामिन फ्रैंकलिन ने कहा है-‘जो लोग थोड़े वक्त की सुरक्षा की खातिर जरूरी आजादी को छोड़ देंगे, वे न आजादी के लायक हैं, न सुरक्षा के।’ इसका संदर्भ दूसरा था, फिर भी यह एक आदर्श उद्धरण बन चुका है, खासतौर से तब जब आजादी और सुरक्षा के बीच विवाद खड़ा हो जाता है। अगर अदालत ने अपने निर्देशों को बेजामिन फ्रैंकलिन के इस कथन के अनुरूप रखा होता तो क्या निष्कर्ष कुछ अलग होते?

### क्या कुछ बदलेगा?

सुप्रीम कोर्ट के फैसले ने सरकार को एक रास्ता दिखाया है, जिससे वह कश्मीर मामले पर अपने सत्तावादी और सैन्य नजरिए को छोड़ सकती है, लेकिन मुझे संदेह है कि सरकार इस रास्ते पर चलेगी। यह फैसला कश्मीर घाटी के सत्तर लाख लोगों के लिए एक उम्मीद भी पैदा करता है कि उनकी स्वतंत्रता बहाल होगी, हालांकि फैसला आने के सात दिन बाद भी अभी तक इसके कोई संकेत नजर नहीं आए हैं।

प्रतिवादी (केंद्र और केंद्र शासित प्रदेश सरकारें) इस बात से नाखुश हैं कि उनकी कार्रवाइयों की नियमित रूप से न्यायिक समीक्षा होती रहेगी। याचिकाकर्ता इसलिए नाखुश हैं कि उन्हें हकीकत में राहत नहीं मिली है, सिर्फ कानूनी स्थिति के।

अदालत और भी काफी कुछ कर सकती थी, जैसे प्राइवैसी केस (जस्टिस पुट्टास्वामी) में किया था। एक मौका निकल गया। हो सकता है, मामले की अगली सुनवाई या अगले मामले की सुनवाई पर और ज्यादा कुछ किया जाए। कभी-कभी, कानून निराश कर सकता है।

से बाहर निकालना, ताकि बेरोजगारी कम होने लगे। बेजोस ने कहा है कि अमेजन द्वारा वह 2025 तक दस लाख नई नौकरियां पैदा करेगा का इरादा रखते हैं। ऐसे व्यक्ति को अपमानित करने के बदले बाहें खोल कर स्वागत नहीं करना चाहिए था क्या?

भारत को एक नहीं, हजारों बेजोस की जरूरत है। क्या मोदी भूल गए हैं कि किस तरह दंग श्याओ पिंग ने चीन में जब विदेशी निवेशकों के लिए दरवाजे खोले तभी जाकर उस देश में आधुनिक सड़कें, रेलवे सेवाएं, शहर और बंदरगाहों के निर्माण का काम शुरू हुआ था? एक समय था जब भारत विकास के तौर पर चीन से आगे था। अब चीन हमसे इतना आगे निकल गया है कि अमेरिका से मुकाबला कर रहा है। हम हैं कि नागरिकता जैसे मसलों में उलझ कर यह भी नहीं देख पाए हैं कि बांग्लादेश से अब हमारी सीमाएं पार करके बहुत कम ‘युसपैटिए’ आते हैं, इसलिए कि बार्लादेश भी हमसे आगे निकल गया है रोजगार के नए अवसर उपलब्ध कराने में और कई अन्य आर्थिक और सामाजिक क्षेत्रों में।

कइवा सच यह है कि समाजवाद के नाम पर अपने इस गरीब देश में तरक्की हुई अगर किसी की तो सरकारी अफसरों और राजनेताओं की और उनके कुछ मुट्ठी भर उद्योगपति दोस्तों की। नरेंद्र मोदी से हम जैसां ने उम्मीद रखी थी कि वे इस तरह की गलत समाजवादी नीतियों को कूड़ेदान में फेंक कर एक नया आर्थिक रास्ता ढूंढेंगे। अब भी वक्त है मोदीजी चल पड़िए उस नए रास्ते पर जिसका सपना आपने दिखाया था।

दुश्य में तो सीढ़ियों पर मुट्ठी भर लोग ही नजर आते हैं, लेकिन वह उसे बड़े प्रदर्शन की तरह दिखाए जा रही है। उसने ‘बोलने वाली जनता’ भी अपने पास तैयार खड़ी कर रखी है। नागरिकता कानून विरोधी आंदोलन जितना अपने आप बना, उससे अधिक चैनलों के कैमरों ने बनाया। कैमरे न दिखाएँ तो आंदोलन एक दिन में ढेर हो जाए- प्रदर्शनों से उकताया हुआ एक पैनलिस्ट एक चर्चा में कह उठता है!

बात सच नजर आती है। भीड़ कैमरों में दिखने के लिए आती है। कभी खबर न बना सकने वाले आदमी को टीवी कैमरे ‘खबर बनाने वाला’ बनाते हैं। इसीलिए आंदमी कैमरों के लिए आता है।

कैमरे हटा दीजिए, फिर देखिए कि किसी आंदोलन के लिए कितने लोग टिकते हैं! एक शाम कुछ चैनल तुर्कमान गेट को नए शाहीनबाग की तरह बनाने-बताने लगते हैं, लेकिन कैमरों के हटते ही नया शाहीनबाग बिखरता हुआ नजर आता है! जबसे जम्मू-कश्मीर पुलिस ने एक डीएसपी को दो आतंकवादियों के साथ पकड़ा है, तबसे ‘सुरक्षा’ भी विवाद में फंस गई है। सवाल पूछा जाने लगता है कि इतने दिन तक सुरक्षा का इंतजाम देखने वाला बंदा आदमी क्या पकड़ा गया? इसका जवाब अभी आना है।

शुक्रवार की सुबह शाहीनबाग की कहानी को फांसी की फौदी मांग की कहानी ने ‘टेकओवर’ कर लिया! एक एंकर एक एक्टिविस्ट के सुर में सुर मिला के कहे जा रही थी : लीजिए अब बाईस जनवरी को फांसी नहीं होगी! एक की दया याचिका ने फांसी को फिर टटलाया! अगर हमारे कुछ एंकरों और रिपोर्टरों का बस चले तो खुद ही उनको लटका दें। मर्सी पीटीशन उनके ठेंगे से। एक रिपोर्टर ने जल्लाद से कुछ इस तरह से बात की मानो जल्लाद न हो, कोई आर्टिस्ट हो कि फांसी की तैयारी करते वक्त आपको कैसा लगता है? बताइए, जल्लाद क्या कहे?

सभी चैनल जल्लाद जल्लाद खेलते दिखते हैं! शुक़रवार की सुबह शाहीनबाग की कहानी ने ‘टेकओवर’ कर लिया! एक एंकर एक एक्टिविस्ट के सुर में सुर मिला के कहे जा रही थी : लीजिए अब बाईस जनवरी को फांसी नहीं होगी! एक की दया याचिका ने फांसी को फिर टटलाया!

अगर हमारे कुछ एंकरों और रिपोर्टरों का बस चले तो खुद ही उनको लटका दें। मर्सी पीटीशन उनके ठेंगे से। एक रिपोर्टर ने जल्लाद से कुछ इस तरह से बात की मानो जल्लाद न हो, कोई आर्टिस्ट हो कि फांसी की तैयारी करते वक्त आपको कैसा लगता है? बताइए, जल्लाद क्या कहे? सभी चैनल जल्लाद जल्लाद खेलते दिखते हैं!