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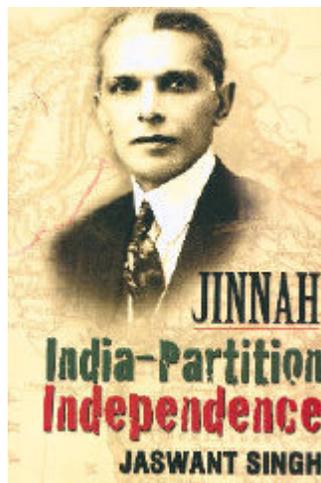
BOOK REVIEW

HINDU 17.11.09 BOOK REVIEW

An enigma called Jinnah

K. N. PANIKKAR

This book has drawn attention not because of its historical merit but due to its revisionist character



JINNAH – India, Partition, Independence: Jaswant Singh;

Rupa & Co., 7/16, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002. Rs. 695.

The political career of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who along with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru, occupied the centre stage of the anti-colonial movement, has several versions, both academic and popular. While some celebrate his triumph in creating a sovereign state against many odds, others focus on his tragedy of unrealised ambition, as the Pakistan which came into being bore very little resemblance to the one he dreamt of.

The present version written by Jaswant Singh, a prominent leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party, has attracted attention not because of its historical merit but because of its revisionist character. The BJP has held Muslims solely responsible for Partition, with Jinnah as their undisputed leader. Jaswant Singh has cast doubts on this long-held view by underscoring the inability of the Congress leaders such as Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel to preserve the unity of the country. Understandably, he attracted the ire of both the BJP and the Congress. The BJP is piqued by his relatively sympathetic treatment of Jinnah and his criticism of Patel, who has been appropriated as a part of its leadership pantheon. At the same time, to the Congress, the criticism of its leaders not trying enough to avert Partition is nothing short of blasphemy. Jaswant Singh appears to be following the lead given by Lal Krishna Advani in his speech (in Pakistan) wherein he had invoked the secular ideas of Jinnah. The BJP and its predecessors like Jan Sangh had long held the view that the chief architect of Partition was Jinnah and that, but for his obduracy, India would have remained united. Singh does not dismiss this thesis, but only qualifies it. In doing so, he seems to regard Jinnah more as a victim of history shaped by the imperatives of colonial politics than as one who was able to mould it according to his own will. After all, the British, the Congress, and the Muslim League were jointly engaged in solving the jigsaw puzzle of Indian politics.

Communalism

The author brings out the fact that none of them could have solved it independently. While doing so, he seems to be sensitive to the complexities of the historical process which culminated in Partition, yet unable in practice to look beyond the way a couple of individuals shaped the destiny of the subcontinent. However important a role Jinnah or Nehru had played in the politics of this period, the partition of India was essentially the result of communalisation of both the Hindu and Muslim communities. By 1940, communalism

had become so powerful that even Gandhiji had become helpless. Jinnah was an enigma, difficult to understand and more so to explain. Without being a devout Muslim — his irreligious habits are well known — he not only earned the loyalty of the Muslims of the subcontinent, but succeeded in carving out an independent Islamic state. For someone who started his political career as an ‘Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity’ by playing a prominent role in forging the Lucknow Pact, it was quite a turnaround that he ended up as the ‘sole spokesman’ of Muslim political interests. When did this transition take place is difficult to ascertain, but by the 1930s his alienation from the nationalist mainstream, except for occasional misgivings, appeared to be complete. During the Round Table Conference he “saw the face of danger, the Hindu sentiment, the Hindu mind, the Hindu attitude,” which led him to the conclusion that “there was no hope for unity.” Out of this conviction emerged the ‘two-nation theory,’ around which he marshalled his followers, as evident from the Lahore resolution of 1940. Since then Jinnah relentlessly pursued his quest for partition, aided partly by the colonial rulers and conceded by the Congress leaders. During the negotiations with the Cabinet Mission, Lord Wavell and Lord Mounbatten, Jinnah did not falter from his goal of an independent sovereign state for Muslims. The author holds that “to get Pakistan at all, a completely sovereign, if truncated, Muslim state, was for Jinnah an amazing triumph, the outcome not of some ineluctable historical trend, but of the determination of a single individual.”

Jinnah’s single-minded pursuit of Pakistan was based on a two-nation theory which propounded that the “Muslims had a different conception of life from the Hindus and there was no solution but a division of India,” — this according to the author was a “fundamental error.” But Jinnah’s reading of history and politics was such that he held that unity of India was a myth. But he was not the only one to hold such a view. Much before Jinnah, Vinayak Damodar Savarkar had advocated it as early as in 1924 to explain

his notion of Hindutva. It would be interesting to study whether Hindu communalism contributed to the making of two-nation theory (as advocated by Jinnah) that was at the root of Partition. Jaswant Singh is silent on the role of Hindu communalism in bringing about the “vivisection” of India.

A deep wound

Whatever caused Partition — fatigue or prospects of power or British manipulation — an inhuman uprooting took place of “countless millions as had not ever been experienced, even in this land of great and tragic events...What was left behind was bitterness, a deeply wounding trauma which continues to torment the psyches of the successor countries, till today.” Partition, as the author rightly says, is a defining moment in the history of the subcontinent, the lessons of which should be internalised particularly by those who subscribe to a communal ideology.

TELEGRAPH 20.11.09 BOOK REVIEW

REASONS BEHIND THE RETURN OF THE CARAVAN OF TERROR

Decoding the New Taliban: Insights from the Afghan Field

Edited by Antonio Giustozzi, *Foundation, Rs 795*

The editor of this book does not mince words. The book, in fact, is not only an acknowledgement of the growing strength of the neo-Taliban, but also a polite admission of the West's failure at grasping the intricacies of the Afghan problem. Antonio Giustozzi tries to set right some of the misconceptions by drawing on the vast experiences, mostly first-hand, of specialists who have, because of their professional or academic interests, either travelled extensively in Afghanistan or researched particular issues. The contributors to this volume are well-known journalists, academics, social workers and members of the think-tank who remain involved with the ever-changing social and political realities in Afghanistan and provide the most contemporary insight possible into specific regions or issues.

Giustozzi's overriding concern is to unearth the command-and-control structure of the neo-Taliban, as they have evolved since the Taliban, in their previous incarnation, was pushed out of power by the West-backed operation in Afghanistan post-9/11. The picture is diverse for each of the regions under investigation. The specific reasons for the return are also different, although there are significant overlaps. An indifferent government, the corruption among the Afghan police and State officials, the growing distance between the administration and the populace and wrong war tactics of the Nato forces seem to have hastened, and even encouraged, the Taliban's comeback. But to blame bad governance entirely for the turn of events would be to misjudge a very complex situation. Taliban efforts to regroup were, in many instances, given a

fillip by tribal infighting (Alokozai *versus* Ishaqzai in Helmand) or by a more unholy concern to secure the drug traffic across Afghanistan's borders. While discussing Taliban networks in Uruzgan, Martine van Bijlert, in fact, reiterates an earlier observation on the Taliban movement by comparing it to a "caravan" to which different people attached themselves for various reasons.

Whatever the reason for the attachment, neo-Taliban groupings have grown in strength over the past few years. In their assessments of the past and recent Taliban organizations in Kabul, Andar, Uruzgan, Herat, Farah, Baghdis, Ghor, Helmand and in north Afghanistan, the contributors have shown how from small, unwelcome fighting units, the Taliban have come to establish parallel governments and courts in many of the districts. The Taliban, of course, have not met with equal success in all the provinces. In a number of provinces, they remain disorganized or confused units of fighters under self-aggrandizing commanders or unruly men uncontrolled by the central leadership. But in many, they are already a coherent unit with an established hierarchy and command structure, and this is what Giustozzi tries to establish by papering over what he believes to be minor aberrations to this conclusion. In his study of the insurgency in Helmand, Tom Coghlan delineates the basic structure of the command. The basic military formation, he says, is the *mahaz* or front. It would typically consist of around 20 fighters under a single charismatic leader. It would "arrive" in the Taliban as a formed band with fighters connected to each other (*andiwals* or comrades) through blood ties, or tribal, village, locality or *madrasa* links. The commander is still not a full *mahaz* commander and would require some more experience in combat to be acknowledged by the leadership (the Quetta *shura* or the Taliban Leadership Council) to qualify for independent charge. Till that happens, he is only sub-commander. The Taliban claim there are as many as 25 *mahazes* in a single district.

What Giustozzi tries to put a finger on is the development of the hierarchy with a definite command. Strict control, apparently, is

maintained by the central leadership over commanders, who are transferred regularly and rested, along with the fighters, at certain intervals. The command structure has a lot to do with the financial control maintained by the leadership. Commanders, as Gretchen Peters points out in her study of the importance of the drug trade in financing the insurgency, are required to give to the leaders a steady amount through their collection of drug money *via* taxation at several junctures. The money comes back from the high command in the form of cash or weapons or other assistance.

Giustozzi does not seem to completely agree with this assessment of the importance of the drug money in retaining the command structure or estimates of how much it amounts to. And that leaves the readers with some discomfort. Contributors repeatedly point to the fact that the organization of the Taliban are “far from unified”, and at times even chaotic. Yet Giustozzi seems to insist that the Taliban have crossed a certain threshold in the development of the command structure, with definite ideas about the use of resources. They may have. But this growth is definitely not uniform or consistent. Moreover, without a more comprehensive explanation of how the leadership executes its command (they seem to be putting heads together only in planning major offensives) and how it reins in its diverse and diffuse force down the line, the fog will remain about the structural organization of the Taliban, who give remarkable freedom to their men to seek personal revenge and do anything possible to keep the State and society in a perpetual limbo.

The book otherwise provides some remarkable insights into how the neo-Taliban, a more radicalized breed than their progeny, are adapting to the changed circumstances of battle. Earlier reservations about pictures, television and the media have been thrown to the winds to promote the global image of the Taliban as an organization that transcends the limits of tribal and national linkages. The Taliban are also fast changing their harsh ways to co-opt the public in their drive for an Islamic Emirate, especially those who believe that the Taliban are a “castle of butter”,

which will melt as soon as the harsh responsibility of governance falls on them.

CHIOSREE BASU

CIVIL SERVICE

HINDUSTAN TIMES 16.11.09 CIVIL SERVICE

Testy times ahead for IAS-bound state babus

Aloke Tikku

Don't just trust the impressive annual confidential reports of state civil officers. Test them again to harvest the best.

The Union Public Service Commission has told the government to overhaul the induction process for state civil servants into the three elite All India Services (AIS): Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and Indian Forest Service (IFS).

In its new form, state civil service officers will have to clear, like fresh recruits to the IAS and other All India Services, a written test and face an interview panel in Delhi to make the cut.

Nearly 350 state civil service officers are inducted into the three All India Services every year.

According to existing rules, one-third of the sanctioned strength of AIS officers can be inducted through promotions from state services.

But they all make it to the prestigious services on the strength of the state government's recommendations, backed by their Annual Confidential Reports (ACR) which rank their performance as outstanding.

Selection committees presided by a UPSC member ordinarily meet annually to select the state government officials for promotion.

"Given how a government function, it is not always a very fair system," a senior official at the Department of Personnel and Training acknowledged. Only one in three officers — who comes with a

recommendation of the state government for recruitment into the AIS — makes it.

Besides, officers need to be on the right side of the political executive of the states concerned to have their names recommended.

The UPSC recently completed a review of the present system of holding selection committee meetings based on the ACRs of state service officers and recommended a three tier recruitment process to introduce a competitive examination, an interview and an assessment of service records to fill up the promotion quota.

“This would have the salutary effect of encouraging competition and privileging merit,” UPSC chairman Prof. D.P. Agarwal said last week.

The UPSC chairman said such a system could, in time, be extended to promotions within the Central Services as well.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

TELEGRAPH 19.11.09 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

FROM DREAM TO REALITY

- BENGAL'S CRISIS HIDES IN IT THE POTENTIAL FOR CHANGE

N.K. Singh

This newspaper recently hosted its annual debate on whether a resurgent Bengal was an impossible dream. Not surprisingly, the verdict of the 600-odd listeners went against the motion. This has as much to do with tangible societal gains as with an enveloping sense of crisis which embeds enormous opportunities. The glorious past of Bengal needs no persuasion. It was integrated with the rest of the world through trade and interchange of knowledge. Ironically, much of Bengal's glory dimmed post-Independence, and for a good three decades the state remained in the shadows, for reasons complex and mostly man-made.

The current low-level equilibrium emanates from a combination of failed policies and promises, the inability to attract talent and capital, together with a growing sense of despondency. The restlessness for change to a new economic and political order has gripped the psyche of West Bengalis. The growing disconnect between the urban and the rural and rising inequality add to the unease and to the quest for rapid change. However, an objective assessment must be cognizant of multiple spheres.

First, the problems of Bengal are generally not atypical of the problems of India: primarily about how to create employment, improve efficacy and the quality of the public delivery system, minimize corruption, create an environment which fosters innovation and enable the realization of demographic dividends. To overcome the vested lobbies, it is necessary to redo our rules and regulations, particularly regarding labour and manufacturing, in creating high growth, high employment and a more egalitarian social order. And to change mindsets in tune with

contemporary challenges. A lot of issues that are being argued against Bengal are equally true of India, be it issues of human development, governance or corruption. Bengal mirrors India's problems as India mirrors Bengal's problems.

Second, the other issue that needs specific mention is that life is bigger than mere gross domestic product numbers. Growth and outcome cannot be measured merely by changes in the GDP numbers. The expensive costumes of Carla Bruni, the wife of President Nicolas Sarkozy, or what Paris Hilton secures from the exclusive designers, Louis Vuitton or Chanel, may have added to the GDP numbers of France but has not contributed to the index of French happiness.

That is why President Sarkozy appointed a commission comprising two Nobel laureates, Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz, who, in their report, pointed out that the outcome of growth cannot be measured by quantifiable numbers alone but through a broader index of happiness. This *inter alia* implies a cohesiveness of society, levels of tolerance, communal harmony and the social mobility of the population. No one can make the accusation that the societal evolution of Bengal has been based on narrow, regional chauvinistic lines. These are not variables that can be quantified and captured by GDP numbers.

Third, on growth rates, from 1970 to 1980, Bengal grew at 3.2 per cent compared to the Indian average of 3.1 per cent; between 1980 and 1991, Bengal grew at 4.2 per cent compared to India at 5.6 per cent, a notch lower. But, then, consider the next 20 years — from 1990 to 2001, West Bengal grew over 6.7 per cent, whereas India lagged behind at 5.7 per cent. Similarly, between 1993-94 and 2004-05, Bengal's growth at 8.55 per cent was well over India's average growth of 6.8 per cent. True, it is only in the post-2004 period that growth rates in Bengal have been somewhat slower than India's growth rates, which shot up exponentially during this period. On other parameters, for instance, health and education, it has made significant progress. On education, the state

ranked second and seventh in the categories of construction of classrooms and appointment of teachers under the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. Similarly, in the percentage of children between Class III-V who can read, it ranks eighth among the states, while in arithmetic it ranked second. Regarding health, Bengal, with its infant mortality rate of 37 per cent, is well below the national average of 55 per cent; in child mortality rates, 12.2 per cent against the Indian average of 18.4 per cent, and in mortality under five, at 59.6 per cent compared to the all-India average of 74 per cent.

In land reforms, it has made important strides, being the only state which distributes land to landless peasants more than it acquires. On decentralization and the *panchayati raj*, it is a trailblazer, having initiated action on devolution to local institutions many years prior to the constitutional amendment that empowered the rest of India.

Fourth, the word 'resurgent' implies 'to rise again'. The ingredients for such a rise in Bengal are available, provided we can build on these ingredients in the demographic differential of the population of the state and the geographic contours of its territory. Growth in India has largely been an urban coastal story. Although Bengal's population is largely rural, it is urbanizing faster than the rest of India. We all know the geography of Bengal, and that in addition to coastlines it has rich inland waterways which can help not only in transport but also in faster integration with peripheral economies.

If Bengal is able to overcome the current disputes in land reforms and find rural consensus in alternative land use, it can regain its position as the most industrialized state that it was in the Sixties and even up to the 1980s, when it produced more than 10 per cent of the country's industrial output. It is true that the backbone of industrialization lies not so much in large industries, but in thousands of medium- and small-scale ones. These can become a manufacturing hub providing meaningful employment to the young, and also alternative economic activity to

those currently occupied in agriculture. Indeed, this would require a new set of laws relating to labour, manufacturing, urbanization and, above all, a vastly improved rural connectivity. But the problem is the potential of Bengal to become the manufacturing hub of India and to provide its economy with what economists call India's missing middle. Having achieved success in education and considering its past reputation as a knowledge and culture centre, it can emerge as a new knowledge hub, and by providing greater autonomy to institutions for higher learning it can attract the best and brightest across India for learning, research and teaching. No one needs to be persuaded that Calcutta and Bengal have an awesome history in knowledge leadership, and can transcend others in becoming once again a global centre of excellence in education. These can be trigger-points and catalysts for re-igniting the growth momentum.

Fifth, the ingredients for a renaissance movement may not still be in sight, but resurgence in the etymology of the word was repeatedly used from 1768 onwards "to imply one who rises again". And Tucker, for the first time, mentioned "we who are alive shall be caught in the clouds together with the resurgence". Resurgence is to repeat and to do what has been achieved. For the reasons cited above, the stage is set for Bengal to be resurgent once again. Consider a January 2009 report of the World Bank entitled, "The Investment Climate in 16 Indian States", which ranks West Bengal as a decent sixth among the major states of India in terms of business climate. Equally impressive is the fact that Bengal ranks higher than some of the hitherto leading states like Tamil Nadu, Punjab and Maharashtra in having a better investment climate. According to the report, the variables that impact business climate in which Bengal is above the national average are infrastructure, institutions, cost of power, tax administration, availability of technology, proximity to customers, transparency, trade financing and availability of inputs. This goes to show that, notwithstanding the recent controversies on land acquisition, Bengal still offers better investment opportunities compared to many other states, and one can see the bright spots.

Yes, one has to accept that we all perceive a sense of crisis. The ongoing violence in rural areas, the conflict between Maoists and cadre- based Leftist parties, failed industrialization, broken promises by the Videocon Group, the walkout by the Tatas, rising unemployment, increasing anarchy — are clear signs of crisis. There is no denying the fact that Bengal is at a crossroads. This is because, on the one hand, economic opportunities are enormous if the transition is successful and orderly. The price of failure, on the other hand, is inordinately high. And yet, because there is change in the air and because the foundation has already been laid, the prospect of a resurgence is much brighter than at any time in the past. The present crisis embeds in itself the opportunity of change. India cannot prosper without a prosperous Bengal. And a prosperous Bengal will make for a prosperous India.

THE AUTHOR IS A MEMBER OF THE RAJYA SABHA

EDUCATION

INDIAN EXPRESS 17.11.09 EDUCATION

DEGREES OF HALF MEASURES

Pratap Bhanu Mehta

The proposed reforms in India's premier university, Delhi University, shed interesting light on the institutional challenges of reform in India and offer wider lessons. Many reforms have been on the table. But the switch to a semester system has elicited most discussion and consternation. In principle the idea of a semester system is a good one. But the idea is being fetishised in a way that fundamentally confuses ends and means. As often happens in reform debates in India, the focus is more on the form, rather than the objective of reform. What should have been a reform ensconced in a wider pedagogical debate, has become largely a calendar reform. And the result may be that we have a course structure that is neither fish nor fowl.

What is interesting about Delhi University's reform towards a semester system is that it neither takes on board the truly revolutionary elements of a semester system. Nor does it take fully into account the local context, so that there can be adequate preparation for the switch. Ideally, a semester system allows you to achieve the following objectives. It can facilitate the creation of a credit system, and hence allow more choice and flexibility. In institutions where the semester system has real pedagogical bite, it is premised upon one important fact: that the teachers teaching particular classes evaluate their own students. Delhi University's reform does not achieve either of these objectives.

On the choice and flexibility front, ostensibly a system of majors and minors has been introduced. So the course requirement in the majors has been reduced to allow for more courses in a minor. But this expansion of choice is relatively illusory. A genuinely intellectually interesting

expansion of choice would not be limited by a major-minor structure. Once the requirements of the departments are fulfilled, it would allow wide choices, including the possibility of social science students taking science classes (at the appropriate level). So someone interested in environment majoring in history could, after fulfilling their major, take a relevant course offering in any discipline including the sciences, rather than being confined to the minor. But this would require better basic preparation.

A semester system works well when each individual faculty member has substantial freedom to innovate in course offering at his or her level. This is possible only where there is no disjunction between those who set the syllabus, those who teach and those who evaluate. The crisis of undergraduate education has its source, in part, in this disjunction. In some ways, by increasing rather than decreasing the prominence of university-wide exams, the semester system may exacerbate this disjunction. Given our institutional realities, this is not an easy disjunction to fix. But it is disappointing that there is no roadmap that is even trying. The ways in which the major-minor choices have been configured also diminish departmental autonomy. In a good American university, the departments you are majoring in have great autonomy to set the distributional requirements you need to fulfil in your non-major courses, to balance pedagogical objectives and choice. In some ways, it would have been better if this move had also been in the context of a discussion of what kind of autonomy is appropriate at each level of the institution.

But the discussion of autonomy really brings out the issue at the heart of the reform: the serious trust deficit within Indian institutions. In some respects Delhi University has more of an administrative identity than an academic one. Delhi University has top-end colleges, but it also has a considerable number of bottom-end ones. And across departments there is great variation. More accomplished departments think taking courses in certain other departments will be a diminution in standards. What this

enormous variation produces is several different universities rather than one; yet administrative logic has to operate on the fiction that DU is one academic entity. When reforms try and average across great variation, the result is often odd: it inhibits the good from getting better, and it fuels anxiety at the lower end. One of the reasons a proper discussion of who should have how much autonomy is impossible is because the good departments or colleges don't trust that others will put it to good use; the weak ones don't care if the good ones are being trampled on. Thus you have a very paradoxical outcome: a reform can go through by due process even when many of the top colleges are opposing it.

This reform story is also symptomatic of a larger trend in reform. While we are good at picking out the general direction of reform, we do not want to confront difficult questions about putting in the preconditions that would make reform meaningful and successful. In the DU story three elements are missing. First, there needs to be much more thorough conversation about the degree structure as a whole. For instance, can undergraduate degrees give the combination of basic skills and choice in the current three-year format? Or, if we are committed to the three-year format would we be better served by concentrating on the basics rather than the illusion of choice? There has to be a more explicit articulation of the pedagogical tradeoffs we are making. Second, there is a nuts and bolts institutional context of reform. The promise of pedagogical innovation rings hollow when your ability to cater to basics of infrastructure, student-teacher ratios, and the relative supply of teachers are diminishing. Each university needs a long-term strategy map that is more than a statement of objectives, where all the different elements of reform can be placed in relation to the concrete circumstances of that university, not in relation to an abstract template.

Finally, most of these reforms are being mandated by the UGC. So the source of reforms is consistent with the logic of bureaucratic centralisation; hence the emphasis of form over substance. Delhi University was right to reject the authority of NAAC; though it would

have been better if this had been consistently argued on the grounds of the university's stature, rather than exaggerated fears about commercialisation.

Delhi University is also a victim of the best in it. Some exceptions apart, the best teachers have a self-satisfied complacency about the state of their university and react in negative mode to serious proposals for change. Delhi University can set new benchmarks in how to make public universities better. It will be terrific if it can move beyond half-baked reforms and half-baked opposition to a genuine game plan to elevate India's most important university.

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TELEGRAPH 19.11.09 EDUCATION

NEW EXPERIMENTS TO CURE AN OLD MALAISE

B. Venkatesh Kumar

An Indian born US citizen, Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, having won a Nobel prize, has brought immense happiness to us as a nation, and in particular to the academic community. That the Nobel laureate was an undergraduate student at one of India's leading state universities — Maharaja Sayajirao University, Baroda — is even more gratifying. In fact, our state universities have always been home to some of the most outstanding students who have come to occupy positions of high professional and academic standing in later life.

While good students are still persuaded to go to the state universities for higher education, sadly their numbers are fast declining. The abysmal state of affairs in these universities is a cause for great concern. With the newer Central universities coming in, and with many other universities — world-class, private, foreign — in the pipeline (if Kapil Sibal has his way), a serious challenge is going to be posed to existing state universities.

Not only will the new universities attract good quality students, but they will, even more so, attract many good quality faculty from the state universities. These faculty members will move for a variety of reasons — and foremost among these will be the freedom to pursue intellectual pursuits without getting bogged down by the archaic governance structure that impedes the functioning of state universities. Monetary and other professional benefits, post the recommendations of the sixth pay commission, would also add to the reasons in some ways, but will not be the sole criterion.

This is not to say that all Central universities attract good quality students and faculty. For a variety of reasons, barring some really well-known and well-established Central universities, a number of them are still struggling to attract the very best. In some cases, Central universities (especially in the northeastern region) have not been able to attract a mix of pan-Indian and academically engaging students or a bright faculty because of their remote locations and lack of proper infrastructure and medical facilities.

On the contrary, one would find, even today, that there is still some attraction left in the state universities. A lot of students from rural and *mofussil* areas, and even from the Northeast, continue to come to state universities located in urban areas.

Therefore, while too much attention is being focused on Central universities in terms of expansion and liberal funding, it is equally important that some of India's leading state universities, which have had a legacy of imparting liberal education and of developing an atmosphere for intellectual pursuit, should be revived.

While some serious efforts have been made by the human resource development ministry, along with the University Grants Commission and the Planning Commission, to help state universities in a variety of ways, unfortunately, most state universities continue to suffer. In fact, the prime minister, Manmohan Singh, in his 150th anniversary address at the University of Mumbai aptly summarized the current state of affairs: "Our university system is, in many parts, in a state of disrepair. We need better facilities, more and better teachers, a flexible approach to curriculum development to make it more relevant, more effective pedagogical and learning methods and more meaningful evaluation systems. The quality of governance of many state educational institutions is a cause for concern. I am concerned that in many States, university appointments, including that of Vice-Chancellors, have been politicized and have become subject to caste and communal

considerations. There are complaints of favouritism and corruption. This is not as it should be. We should free university appointments from unnecessary interventions on the part of governments and must promote autonomy and accountability. I urge states to pay greater attention to this aspect. After all, a dysfunctional education system can only produce dysfunctional future citizens!”

One of the urgent ways in which state universities can be revived is by addressing the most important issue of the governance of universities. This issue has been raised and addressed in the recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission and, subsequently, in the Yash Pal committee’s report as well. In spite of these issues being deliberated, the efforts towards such reforms that have been undertaken by the state governments are found wanting.

However, Maharashtra is an example that many states could usefully emulate. But for that to happen you require enlightened governors who are also sensitive to the changes taking place in the realm of higher education at the national level. The governor of Maharashtra, S.C. Jamir, in his capacity as chancellor of universities, has played a landmark role in institutionalizing a process of governance through which the standards of selecting a vice-chancellor have been raised enormously. This has been made possible with the support of the state cabinet through which the Maharashtra Universities Act 1994 was amended, and a new process has been put in place — this despite the fact that higher education does not figure anywhere as a priority for the Maharashtra government.

The new process is a huge improvement over the previous one. It institutionalizes a system in which there are definite timelines for completing the process of selecting vice-chancellors. It also delineates clearly the persons of eminence who will be a part of the search committee. A cursory look at the names of the chairpersons of the search committees in case of the universities of Mumbai (André Béteille), Pune (B.N. Srikrishna), Kolhapur (Yoginder K. Alagh) and Nashik (N.R.

Madhava Menon), for which the process of selecting vice-chancellors has commenced, reveals that the level of the search process has been clearly raised. In addition, members of the search committees also include existing directors of the Indian institutes of technology and the Indian institutes of management. Further, the search committee will be assisted by a nodal officer identified by the chairperson or an external member who will provide all administrative and logistic support to the search committee. This nodal officer will be from the institute with which the chairperson or the external member is associated. This is an additional, but extraordinary, step as it will truly insulate the process of selection from the state government, the governor's secretariat and the concerned university, as well as minimize the interference of interested parties.

The intentions are clearly visible and seem to be geared at selecting the best. In addition to these initiatives, reforming the composition of the syndicate, academic council and senate is equally important. Together, these changes will set the benchmark for maintaining high standards in the overall governance of universities. One hopes that other states, as well as the mandarins in Shastri Bhavan, are taking note of these momentous changes happening in a state that is known to encourage education barons.

ENVIRONMENT

TIMES OF INDIA 17.11.09 ENVIRONMENT

Consensus Can't Be Forced

Sunjoy Joshi

If some of the popular writing in the western media is to be believed, India's intransigent approach to climate change is all that stands between apocalypse and a happy global consensus on the biggest problem facing mankind. Be that as it may, various stratagems have been deployed to make India shun its highly reactive stance. While some try (coquettishly) to get a rise out of India by seducing it with its self-image as an emerging global power, the less charitable accuse it of "hiding behind its poor". At one end is the seductive charm of India being assigned a seat at the high table; at the other lies the danger of it being relegated to the role of insensitive party spoiler.

As the global community plods on to Copenhagen and beyond, the blame game about who should shoulder the responsibility for failure is already in evidence. The hard facts, however, paint a very different picture from what appears in popular writing. A recent World Bank study shows that, in the 10 years preceding 2006, India was one of the 20 countries in which CO₂ emissions intensity (per unit of GDP on a PPP basis) declined for both halves of this period. Moreover, this decline was more for the latter half than for the first. This happened despite the fact that the share of both industry and services in the GDP rose at the expense of agriculture. Both industry and services actually reduced energy intensity significantly. While traditional biomass consumption remained more or less the same, increase in use of fossil fuels was accompanied by the decreased carbon intensity of such use for both industry and the services sector.

Now compare this taking the world at large. Increase in CO₂ emissions

globally has been more in the second half of the decade. Of greater concern is the fact that the carbon emissions intensity of fossil fuels which declined in the first half actually rose in the second.

In this background, it seems that much of the current blame assigned to emerging economies like India stems from the failure of developed nations to square up past responsibilities accepted as part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It also signals the uncomfortable yet inadmissible realisation that it is well-nigh impossible for the developed world to meet the stringent and deep emission cuts that would be required if global CO₂ emission levels are to be contained below 400 ppm. As Jim Giles pointed out recently in *New Scientist*, any fair allocation of carbon would literally leave the developed nations with no carbon quotas.

Even as international agencies castigate India's energy subsidies for promoting energy inefficiency, these complex cross-subsidies ensure that industrial consumers in India, on a PPP basis, pay the highest power tariffs anywhere in the world. The same holds true for liquid fuel prices where taxes ensure that prices of transport fuels in India are matched by few other countries. While these subsidies may distort the overall energy market, they do create their own pressures for economy of use (it surprises no one that small cars remain the preferred option in India). At the same time, however ham-handedly, they ensure some measure of distributive justice. What they can be faulted for is the extremely inefficient way in which they square things up for the poorest of the poor, and skew fuel choices irrationally. Should the need to impose greater carbon costs on energy be the result of global consensus, these subsidies will certainly have to be raised and unaffordably so. We have already seen this happen with the runaway oil prices of 2008 and market forces once again point in the same direction.

Countries like India, whose per capita emissions are below even the most stringent stabilisation targets considered by international bodies,

cannot be expected to follow a development path in which their emissions from energy use would decline or even stabilise in the near term. Emissions from such countries will necessarily increase in the foreseeable future even as they decrease the carbon intensity of their growth by greater energy efficiency and by moving towards low-carbon energy sources without inordinately increasing the costs of energy for their poor. Even if hypothetically India with 17 per cent of the world's people were to freeze its 4 per cent share of the planet's emissions at current levels, its contribution in preventing the apocalypse being foretold would continue to remain insignificant.

For the global commons to be protected, the world community has to agree to work on a path that eventually leads to a convergence of societies and lifestyles across the world. Targets foisted within any alternative are bound to fail and lead to conflicts. Unless development and action on climate change are addressed simultaneously on common accepted principles of global justice and equity, we will continue to be faced with the current dualism resulting in unresolvable conflicts. The only sustainable consensus remains one that has no room for high and low tables, rather than one that serves to insidiously maintain the status quo.

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POLICE

HINDU 16.11.09 POLICE

Chidambaram asks police to go in for new technology

Special Correspondent

JAIPUR: Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram announced here on Sunday a series of measures, including the launch of a DNA databank and amendments to the Arms Act in the next one year, for improving the country's crime investigation techniques.

Crime investigation needed drastic improvements as the police continued adopting "primitive methods" to track down culprits, he said, inaugurating the XX All India Forensic Science Conference at the Rajasthan Police Academy.

Mr. Chidambaram said there was still a huge gap in the crime investigation methods adopted in the West and in India. "In the next 12 months—in 2010—we will bridge this gap, and I promise to help you [in this regard]," he said. "The police in this country should move away from adopting primitive methods. Go for new technology which is abundantly available."

Terming 2010 the "forensic year," Mr. Chidambaram said the rapid modernisation plan for the next 12 months included the opening of six new regional forensic laboratories, 52 new mobile units, three new hi-tech central laboratories and three new hi-tech GUFDs. Steps would be taken to open a DNA databank, a firearm signature databank and arms and criminal tracking network, besides networking of all forensic

laboratories. The Arms Policy was under review, and a new one would be ready in a few days. Changes would also be made in the Arms Act.

The three-day conference is being attended by forensic scientists and senior police officials, besides a few experts from abroad. The inaugural session was addressed by Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot and Home Minister Shanti Dhariwal.

Mr. Chidambaram said though qualified personnel were available, many posts in forensic laboratories remained vacant. There was need to upgrade the syllabi of the forensic courses and adopt new crime detection techniques.

The country also required new laws for application of modern techniques in crime investigation, including the DNA testing. A Bill was ready. "Thirty countries already have laws. We too will have it soon," he said.

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

TELEGRAPH 16.11.09 POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

PAROCHIAL PASSIONS

- Linguistic chauvinism must be rooted out before it's too late

S.L. Rao

The states reorganization commission in 1955 gave a blueprint for the formation of states on linguistic lines. I was a student in Delhi in 1955, and K.M. Panikkar, a member of the commission, noted historian and later ambassador to China, came to talk to us on the same day after signing the report. He told us of the two major problems the commission faced in deciding what to do about Bombay and Bangalore. The former was the commercial capital of India and populated by many linguistic communities. The latter was not a majority Kannada-speaking city.

The SRC recommended that Bombay should be a separate state, and not part of Maharashtra or Gujarat. The Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti agitated and succeeded in persuading the Central government to keep Bombay in the new linguistic state of Maharashtra. In the case of Bangalore, the SRC could not conceive of giving the city to Andhra, surrounded as it was by Kannada-speaking areas and the major city in the old princely state of Mysore. The commission recommended keeping it in Karnataka. As compensation, the SRC suggested that Hindupur, a small town on the border of the two states, go to the new state of Andhra Pradesh.

Soon after, the Shiv Sena started an agitation against 'outsiders', targeting people whose mother tongue was Malayalam or Kannada. The agitations firmly established Bal Thackeray, till then a newspaper

cartoonist with the *Free Press Journal*, and his Shiv Sena as the protector of Marathi interests.

After a few years, the Shiv Sena transformed itself to become the protector of Hindu as well as Marathi interests. The Sena had no compunction about using violence to make its presence felt. Bombay saw frequent Sena-led violence. The ruling Congress governments did not fight the Sena but appeared to tolerate it. The Sena's record of violence, the laxity of the Bharatiya Janata Party-Shiv Sena government in the Nineties, and the ineffective subsequent nine years of the Congress-Nationalist Congress Party government led to Bombay's decline as the commercial capital of India.

It also prepared the ground for Raj Thackeray, after he lost to his cousin, Uddhav, as successor to Bal Thackeray. He quickly achieved national prominence by targeting the many migrants from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar who had flocked to Mumbai for employment. He said they were taking away jobs from the Marathi *manoos*.

No other city in India has witnessed so far a chauvinistic movement to parallel the Shiv Sena. Bangalore is less the city of Kannada speakers than it was in 1955. Much of the property is owned by people from other states, especially from Andhra. Despite a local Kannada chauvinistic movement that uses violence to make its views known, it has not developed a political constituency as has the Sena. There is little agitation to keep local jobs for the Kannadigas.

There are reports of violence against migrant farm labour from Bihar in Punjab and Haryana. With the introduction of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, states like Tamil Nadu, which are experiencing a shortage of farm labour and high wages, are getting labour from Orissa. On the Bombay parallel, some local political leader might also fast-track himself by subjecting these migrants to similar treatment that the Shiv Sena and Raj Thackeray have meted out to

Malayalam- and Kannada-speakers and to Biharis in Bombay.

The Centre has been invisible in moving against state governments — and glaringly against Maharashtra, run by the two parties which are allies at the Centre — that allow such movements to take root. It also speaks badly of the quality of governance in such Indian states where political parties get away with abuse of migrants from other states. Freedom of movement is a right enshrined in the Constitution. It is the duty of local governments to prevent this kind of abuse, and of the Centre to ensure that such abuse does not take place.

Chief ministers like Vilasrao Deshmukh had sound political reasons for not interfering when local passions were being aroused in this way. The Maharashtra government did not interfere to stop the Raj Thackeray-led agitation to compel Karan Johar to apologize for using the name, “Bombay”, in a film and remove that objectionable name. There is no legal bar on the use of the name. Law was allowed to be replaced by violence to theatres and audiences. No filmmaker (and even a columnist!) is comfortable writing about “Bombay”.

The state government also did not prevent the agitation last year against North Indians celebrating the *karva chauth* festival. Clearly, the state government under Deshmukh thought it could reap some brownie points with the Marathi *manoos*, without directly participating in agitations against migrants from other states. The Central government has not condemned the agitation, let alone act to protect migrant workers. Lalu Prasad made some noises, but they were soon forgotten. There has been no effective action to stop such illegal and unconstitutional blackmail.

Problems of local populations resisting migrants are not new. The return of Jews in thousands to Israel after World War II and the subsequent eviction of Palestinians from what had been their homeland for at least 2,000 years is an example of complex migration. The influx of an estimated 20 million Bangladeshis into Assam, without any resistance

from Indian governments, led to the rise of violent militancy among local Assamese that continues to this day. These were migrations from one country to another. The British government's support for the Jewish occupation of Palestine and the eviction of locals, or Indira Gandhi's wooing of her Muslim vote-bank by allowing unfettered entry to Bangladeshi Muslims, created the problems of today.

But problems with local populations for internal migrants within the Indian Union should be unacceptable. Assam not only had to suffer Bangladeshi migration, but it has also had an influx of Indian Bengalis in large numbers. They were more enterprising than the local Assamese and soon dominated trade and professions. This also evoked hostility and militant movements in Assam.

Assam, Bombay, Punjab and Haryana are examples of internal migrations resulting in resistance by locals. But these migrants have every right to move to any part of India. Identity cards to control migration into overcrowded cities like Bombay would balkanize the country, and require amendments to the Constitution. Every government must safeguard this right of free movement and settlement. Unfortunately, governments have not enforced this freedom.

Countries like France and the United Kingdom now insist that foreign migrants learn the local language, abjure external signs of religious identity, and adapt to the local culture. This is something that internal migrants should do voluntarily. When they move to another part of India, they must learn the local language and respect and even follow local culture. However, this happens rarely. In a largely backward and illiterate country, this leads to clashes, as the locals resent these intruders who take away jobs, do well, and do not even pay lip-service to the state that has given them so much.

Even this attempt to conform may not stop such linguistic chauvinism. For example, my father moved from the South to Bombay when he was

17 and lived and worked there for 55 years. He insisted that all of his family be fluent in Marathi. My mother followed Maharashtrian festivals as well. Yet, the Shiv Sena targeted people like us whose mother tongue was not Marathi and who were migrants.

Linguistic states are here to stay. Neither Central not state governments must allow them to become linguistic chauvinists and throttle internal migration. It is the duty of the Central and state governments to protect all Indians anywhere in India and punish such chauvinism. If they do not begin doing so now, India's unity will be fragile.

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TERRORISM

ASIAN AGE 19.11.09 TERRORISM

India's anti-terror tactics on 26/11 eve

Arun Kumar Singh

As we reach the first anniversary of 26/11, the obvious questions are "Are we better prepared?" The answer is "Yes, there is greater awareness and coordination amongst various agencies, despite manpower and material shortages." "Is it possible to foil all 26/11-type future attempts?" The answer is, "No. Though government sanctions for manpower and equipment are in place, these will be progressively inducted only by about 2015". The recent spate of "Red terror alerts" should not surprise anyone, since the risks of a terror attack by land, air or sea will be highest between now and October 2010, with a view of disrupting the Commonwealth Games. As time passes, and hopefully our anti-terror mechanism gets more effective, the nation's vulnerability to terror attacks will reduce.

Just as infiltration risks increase in Kashmir with the melting of snow, the risk of small boat terror attacks off the west coast (and piracy off the distant Gulf of Aden) increases with the end of the monsoons by early October each year. The infamous Kuber trawler-type terrorist operations of 26/11 become possible between October and May when the seas are calmer, putting at risk, vital installations, tourist spots, hotels, schools etc. in Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa and the rest of the west coast. Enterprising terrorists may also use larger merchant ships from Pakistan

or the piracy-infested Gulf of Aden to reach targets on the west or east coast or Andaman and Nicobar islands and disembark terror teams by small rubber boats to spread carnage. Alternatively, Bangladesh-based ISI-LeT-supported terrorists maybe tempted to use the sea routes to carry out terror attacks on the east coast. In addition, terrorists may attempt to strike hinterland targets using land and air routes.

Though the newly-created Indian Marine Police (IMP) has set up some of the planned seven dozen coastal police stations, they have only received about four dozen of the total of 20 dozen small five-tonne and 12-tonne-high speed boats. The IMP needs more than 500 small high-speed boats and about 12 dozen coastal police stations for more effective patrolling.

The badly needed chain of coastal radar stations, with real-time data links are yet to be installed, though committees have travelled the globe to assess similar systems in foreign lands. It is expected that phase 1 (west coast) of this Rs 300-crore Coastal Radar Chain may be ready by 2010. Also, while all vessels (including fishing boats) above 20-metre length have been fitted with the Electronic Automatic Identification System (AIS), a suitable AIS is yet to be found for the thousands of very small fishing boats. About a thousand Distress Alert Transmitters (DATs) have been given free by the government to fishing boats, who can raise a radio alarm in case of being attacked by terrorists. But do remember that each coast of India has over 1,50,000 small fishing boats, with no modern navigation or communication devices. There is an urgent need to provide free AIS and DATs, along with communication sets, to at least two to five out of a group of every 30 to 50 fishing boats. Some progress has been made in giving identity cards to fishermen, and the same also needs to be implemented for sailors sailing on international and domestic shipping.

The Indian Coast Guard (ICG) with 7,000 men, 70 vessels and 44 aircraft, has received government sanctions for doubling its manpower,

patrol vessels and aviation assets, but this will be achieved only by 2015. In my opinion, the ICG urgently needs to quadruple its strength. Fortunately, post-26/11, the ICG has been permitted by the government to search suspected ships in harbour. A new ICG shore station was commissioned in Karwar in November, while similar stations are expected to become operational by February 2010 in Veraval (Gujarat) and Murud Janjira (Maharashtra).

Pre-arrival notification (PAN) of merchant ships, 96 hours prior to entering port, is being given by the shipping agents to the port authorities and the ICG. The crew of every merchant ship must face the immigration and customs authorities and obtain clearance in the same manner as at the international airports.

The Indian Navy, too, will need time to induct the proposed 80 plus 15 small Fast Interceptor Craft (FIC) and get trained men for its 1,000-strong Sagar Prahari Bal. In the interim, existing manpower and hired boats are being used for security of ports and offshore oil rigs. To additionally cater to the east coast and the island territories, the Navy will require a total of 200 FIC and a 3000-strong Sagar Prahari Bal. The Navy needs to have force levels to ensure complete Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) of every object moving at sea, in our present EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) of 200 nautical miles.

The long-neglected harbour police and city police, earlier equipped to deal with petty criminals, are slowly receiving equipment and training to prepare for challenges posed by fourth generation warfare terrorist threats of the 21st century. There are no reports as to whether the over 1,50,000 manpower shortages in the police force have been made up. Similarly, it is to be presumed that the intelligence agencies (IB and RAW) will need till about 2012 to recruit and train badly needed field operatives, and also induct electronic snooping equipment.

Other issues of maritime security which need to be implemented and audited are proper implementation of the ISPS (International Ship and

Port Facility Security Code), CSI (Container Security Initiative), AIS (Shipborne Automatic Identification System) and the proposed LRITS (Long-Range Identification and Tracking System). The issue of land and air security too needs attention. The porous land borders with Nepal, Bangladesh and Burma need to be sealed. The gaps in radar-cum-fighter-cum-anti-air missile coverage of the IAF need to be plugged. It is time we emulated the American system of photographing and electronic fingerprinting of every incoming visitor at our international airports, seaports, railway stations and bus stations. To conclude, the possibility of terror strikes till about 2015 is still very high. The only interim antidote is real time cooperation with international intelligence agencies, continued 24x7 alert and a public declaration that India will respond with a military strike at the source of terror in case of another terror strike.

Vice-Admiral Arun Kumar Singh retired as Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief of the Eastern Naval Command, Visakhapatnam