

LIST OF NEWSPAPERS COVERED

ASIAN AGE

BUSINESS STANDARD

DECCAN HERALD

ECONOMIC TIMES

HINDU

HINDUSTAN TIMES

INDIAN EXPRESS

PIONEER

STATESMAN

TELEGRAPH

TRIBUNE

CONTENTS

AGRICULTURE	3-4
CIVIL SERVICE	5-11
COMMUNICATION	12
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT	13-19
EDUCATION	20-25
EMINENT PERSONALITIES	26-29
ELECTIONS	30
EMPLOYMENT	31
GOVERNORS	32
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS	33-36
INTERNET	37-39
JUDICIARY	40-47
LEGISLATIVE BODIES	48-51
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	52
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION	53-57
TERRORISM	58-61
TRANSPORT	62-63
URBAN DEVELOPMENT	64

AGRICULTURE

PIONEER, APR 9, 2015

GOVT HIKES RELIEF TO FARMERS BY 50%

After receiving assessment reports about the large-scale damage to Rabi crops in 14 States due to unseasonal rain and hailstorms, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday announced 50 per cent hike in compensation and relaxed criteria for availing Government support.

The Prime Minister announced that the criteria of 50 per cent crop damage for providing compensation to affected farmers has been reduced to 33 per cent, which will help more farmers get compensation for their loss. The assessment of crop damage was submitted to the Prime Minister by Central Ministers after visiting the affected States.

Speaking at the launch of the Rs20,000-crore MUDRA Bank, Modi said criteria of 50 per cent crop damage for providing compensation to affected farmers has been reduced to 33 per cent. "The second important decision we have taken is to raise the parameters for helping farmers. The amount of compensation has been increased. If earlier, farmers were getting Rs100 as compensation, now they will get Rs150, if it was Rs1 lakh, they will get Rs1.5 lakh, a 50 per cent increase," he said.

Farmers, the Prime Minister said, have suffered a lot on account of natural calamities. "Last year, it was due to less rainfall and this year due to unseasonal rainfall and hailstorms," Modi said, adding that he took a status report about the situation from Ministers sent to undertake on-the-spot assessment.

Modi said helping farmers in this time of distress is the Government's responsibility and, therefore, it had sent teams of Central Ministers to the affected areas to assess the extent of the damage. He said Union and State Governments, banks and insurance companies would do their utmost to provide relief to farmers. Banks have been asked to restructure farm loans, while insurance companies have been asked to settle claims of farmers on a priority basis.

On providing higher compensation to the affected farmers, Modi said: "It will impose a heavy burden on the exchequer but it is important to help them as they are in distress." The Government had also set up an informal Group of Ministers, headed by Home Minister Rajnath Singh to look into the issue of raising the cap for financial assistance given to farmers whose crops have been affected by natural calamities.

Unseasonal rains and hailstorms have damaged Rabi (winter-sown) crops in 113 lakh hectares of land across 14 States. The total cultivable area in the Rabi season stands at 600 lakh hectares. Rabi crops mainly include wheat, mustard and pulses. Last week, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley said the Government is reviewing norms to raise the compensation limit of farmers in case of drought or heavy rains damaging the crops.

The relief to farmers has come in the backdrop of the raging debate on the controversial Land Acquisition Bill which has been described by the Opposition as "anti-farmer". The Modi Government has attacked Opposition parties, particularly the Congress, for

“spreading false propaganda” on the Bill and maintained that it would advance the development for poor, Dalits and backward classes.

The two-day BJP National Executive meet at Bengaluru last week discussed at length the Land Bill with the party deciding to send its leaders to rural areas to deflate “myths and lies” about “the positive provisions” of the Bill. A detailed power-point presentation on the Land Bill was given to the BJP delegates including Ministers and MPs. The presentation illustrated how the Land Bill could help set up projects of development, progress and generate employment for the economically weaker sections in the country.

In the meeting Modi condemned Congress for alleging that the BJP was “working for the rich” and instead charged it with benefiting “rich people “during last ten years of UPA rule at the Centre. The BJP has decided to galvanize people, particularly in rural areas, to give a final push to the Land Bill which was earlier passed by Lok Sabha but faced a roadblock in the Upper House where BJP is in minority.

CIVIL SERVICE

HINDUSTAN TIMES, APR 14, 2015

Civil services exam: Candidates to submit new preferences

Candidates, who have qualified the civil services (main) examination will have to mandatorily submit a new order of preferences of services they intend to join after their final selection, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has said.

As per change in rules, all the candidates who have qualified in the written part of civil services (main) examination, 2014 shall mandatorily indicate revised preferences of services for which he or she is interested to be allocated to.

The candidates will be required to fill up the revised services preferences and submit the same online as per the details or guidelines which will be available on the Commission's website shortly, the UPSC said in a statement.

The **results of the civil services (main)** examination were declared on Sunday by the Commission. The personality test of the successful candidates is likely to commence from April 27, it said.

"The first batch of e-Summon letter will be made available on the Commission's website www.upsc.gov.in latest by April 18, 2015. The second and third batches of the e-Summon letters would be uploaded subsequently," the UPSC said.

Successful candidates, who are unable to download their e-Summon letters from the website at least five days before the commencement of the personality test or interview, should immediately contact the Commission, it said.

The marks sheets of candidates, who have not qualified, will be put on the Commission's website within 15 days from the date of publication of the final result (after conducting personality test) and will remain available for a period of 60 days, the UPSC said.

The prestigious civil services examination is conducted annually in three stages--preliminary, main and interview--to select officers for Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

"The result of one candidate roll no.542075 has been withheld subject to the outcome of the court case," the UPSC said without mentioning details or background of the case.

The results of civil services (main) exam have been declared pending the outcome of a review petition filed in the Supreme Court by the Centre seeking to review its recent verdict that scrapped reservation for Jat community, official sources said.

The Supreme Court had on March 17 set aside the decision of former UPA regime to include Jats in central list of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) to accord quota benefits to them following which, the Centre had moved the apex court on April 1, seeking review of its decision.

The candidature of the candidates is provisional subject to their being found eligible in all respects. They will be required to produce the original certificates in support of their claims pertaining to age, educational qualifications, community, physical handicap and other documents such as questionnaire, attestation form and TA form, etc. at the time of their personality test, the UPSC said.

"They are, therefore, advised to keep the said documents ready with them," it said, adding that no request for change in the date and time of the personality test, intimated to the candidates, will be entertained.

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 13, 2015

Need to boost staff capabilities to meet people's aspirations: PMO official

Mishra said it is a big challenge before all the training institutions, faculty and trainers, to bring the required changes in skills, knowledge.

NEW DELHI: There is a need to enhance skills and capabilities of government employees to meet people's aspirations, a senior official in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) said today.

Addressing a training programme here, P K Mishra, Additional Principal Secretary in the PMO said the goal of the government is to make governance efficient, effective, accountable, responsive and transparent.

"This requires significant capacity building of our employees at all levels to meet the challenges and aspiration of the people and deliver various programmes launched by the new government," he said.

Mishra said it is a big challenge before all the training institutions, faculty and trainers, to bring the required changes in skills, knowledge and aptitude of employees so that delivery improves.

He was speaking during the closing ceremony of the first national symposium on excellence in training organised by the Department of Personnel and Training in

collaboration with [United Nations Development Programme](#) (UNDP) here.

He presented the award for excellence in training to the 12 best practice initiatives taken by individual trainers and training institutions under four thematic areas.

The two-day event was inaugurated yesterday by [Jitendra Singh](#), Minister of State for PMO.

The symposium was organised with the overarching objective of providing an annual national platform for various stakeholders associated with training of government sector employees, an official statement said.

The symposium was designed to promote sharing of good practices among stakeholders involved in training among others, it said.

ASIAN AGE, APR 8, 2015

UP babus turn activists, government turns blind eye

Activism is in the air and more and more bureaucrats in Uttar Pradesh are turning social activists with a vengeance, causing considerable embarrassment to the people in power. The latest to join the activist bandwagon is senior IAS officer Surya Pratap Singh who has not only announced his support to secondary teachers who were agitating and refusing to evaluate the UP Board answer sheets.

Earlier, Mr Singh extended his support to students demanding the removal of UPPSC chairman Anil Yadav after the PCS preliminary examination paper was leaked on WhatsApp. He also questioned the lack of action in the case of alleged harassment of a junior lady IAS officer by her senior.

Mr Singh, a 1982-batch UP cadre officer, who has been transferred six times during past one-and-a-half years, and is currently serving as principal secretary, Public Enterprises Department. He is now a part of an NGO called VAST (Voluntary Action for Social Transformation) and has no qualms about speaking his mind openly and also on social networking sites.

“Supporting a public cause of concern does not amount to opposing the government. In fact, it should be seen as assisting the government if one understands the meaning of being a public servant. A public servant should be accountable to the people and should be fair and politically neutral. A public servant should neither be a slave of the ruling party or a party on any issue,” he wrote on his Facebook page this week. He further said that no service rule denies an officer from raising an issue of public concern

Mr Singh, who had a one-and-a-half month stint in the secondary education department, said that he had seen the system’s deterioration.

Mr Amitabh Thakur, senior IPS officer, has also turned into a full-time activist. From filing public interest litigations, to staging demonstrations and questioning the functioning of the system, he does it all with an alarming regularity. Mr Thakur and his activist wife, Nutan Thakur, are making headlines almost every day, raising issues that leave the government red-faced at times.

A former chief secretary, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that this new trend of bureaucrats turning social activists pointed towards a collapse of the system and lack of assertion of political authority.

“Though technically, the officers may not be crossing the line but it is definitely the tradition and decorum of the cadre. I am shocked why the state government is turning a blind eye to such activities and punishment is restricted to just transfers. According to my information, wives of about 38 senior IAS and IPS officers are running their NGOs and are drawing benefits from the government agencies. This kind of activity was unacceptable till a few years ago but nothing seems to matter now which is extremely unfortunate,” he said.

[ASIAN AGE, APR 8, 2015](#)

NDMC chief shifted to agriculture ministry

In a major bureaucratic reshuffle, the Union home ministry transferred New Delhi Municipal Council chairman Jalaj Srivastava and Ms Nutan Guha Biswas, who is principal secretary to lieutenant-governor Najeeb Jung.

Mr Srivastava, a 1984-batch IAS officer, has been appointed as the additional secretary in the Union agriculture ministry and Ms Guha of 1983 batch has been posted as additional secretary in the ministry of women and child development at the Centre.

Mr Srivastava's transfer was due after he was promoted to the rank of additional secretary. He was appointed as the NDMC chairman in August 2013 by the erstwhile Sheila Dikshit

government. Mr Srivastava had served the Delhi government as tax commissioner before he was transferred to Andaman and Nicobar in 2011. Mr Srivastava's transfer has put a question mark on several ongoing NDMC projects, including the smart city project.

Ms Guha's transfer was also due after her empanelment to the rank of the additional secretary. She is said to have herself opted for the deputation in the Union government as the Kejriwal government had refused to make her the chief secretary of Delhi. The Delhi government had already given its approval for her posting to the Centre.

A major reshuffle is also expected within a day or two in the Delhi government as the Joint Cadre Authority that looks into the transfers and postings has approved a list of officials who would be posted outside Delhi and those who have completed their tenure and are keen to join the city administration.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, APR 8, 2015

6% hike in DA for central govt employees

In what is being seen as a gift for government servants, the union cabinet on Tuesday approved a 6% hike in dearness allowance for central government employees and dearness relief for pensioners.

With this, the DA/DR shoots up to 113% of basic pay – up from 107% – with effect from January 1, 2015.

This will benefit 48 lakh government employees and 55 lakh pensioners.

“The combined impact on the exchequer on account of both DA and DR would be of the order of Rs 6762.24 crore per annum and Rs 7889.34 crore in the Financial Year 2015-16 (i.e. for a period of 14 months from January 2015 to February 2016),” said a government release.

The increase is based on the formula based on the recommendations of the sixth pay commission.

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 8, 2015

Government plans to cut IAS officers induction training tenure

The Centre today proposed to reduce the tenure of induction training programme for IAS officers from the present eight to six weeks

NEW DELHI: The Centre today proposed to reduce the tenure of induction training programme for [IAS](#) officers from the present eight to six weeks.

"The duration of induction training programme for officers inducted into [Indian Administrative Service](#) (IAS) is presently of 8 weeks and now it has been proposed to reduce it from 8 weeks to 6 weeks," the [Department of Personnel and Training](#) (DoPT) said in an order.

The department has sought views of the state governments on the proposed amendments by April 24.

"If no reply is received by the stipulated date in this department, it will be presumed that the state governments have no objections to the proposed amendment," it said.

The [DoPT](#) is also considering to reduce the training duration for IAS officers by at least six-months from present about two years. It is examining the reply received from state governments in this regard.

In another order, the Centre has decided that there will be no mandatory induction training for state civil services officers inducted into IAS with less than one year of service.

"It has now been decided with the approval, of competent authority that the officers inducted into IAS with less than one year of service as on July 1, 2016 may be exempted from the requirement of undergoing induction training," the DoPT said.

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 8, 2015

Nilam Sawhney appointed Central Vigilance Commission secretary

She has been appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary for a period of four years from the date of assumption of charge of the post.

NEW DELHI: Senior IAS officer [Nilam Sawhney](#) has been appointed as secretary, [Central Vigilance Commission](#), replacing Alok Kumar who has been made Additional Secretary in Niti Aayog.

Sawhney, a 1984 batch IAS officer, is presently serving in her cadre-- Andhra Pradesh.

She has been appointed in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary for a period of four years from the date of assumption of charge of the post, an order issued by [Department of Personnel and Training](#) (DoPT) said.

Sawhney replaces her batch-mate Alok Kumar who has been appointed as Additional Secretary, NITI Aayog for the balance period of his central deputation tenure i.e. upto December 13, 2016, it said.

[New Delhi Municipal Council](#) (NDMC) chairperson Jalaj Shrivastava has been appointed as Additional Secretary in Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

Shrivastava, a 1984 batch IAS officer of union territories cadre, has been appointed for a period of four years from the date of assumption of charge of the post, it said.

The government has also issued orders for postings of few other Additional Secretary level officers.

Ajay Kumar Bhalla, also from the same batch, has been moved out of Coal Ministry and appointed as Additional Secretary in Department of Commerce.

Bhalla, who was working as Additional Secretary in the Coal Ministry, has been appointed for the balance period of his central deputation tenure i.e. upto June 30, 2017, the order said.

Anuradha Mitra has been appointed as Financial Adviser (Acquisition) & Member (Defence Procurement Board) and Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence, it said.

Amarjeet Sinha, a 1983 batch IAS officer of Bihar cadre, has been appointed as Additional Secretary in Department of Rural Development.

Sinha, presently Additional Secretary in Department of Higher Education, has been appointed for the balance period of his central deputation tenure i.e. upto September 14, 2018, the order said.

R Buhril has been appointed as Advisor, Inter State Council Secretariat under Ministry of Home Affairs in the rank and pay of Additional Secretary.

Buhril is presently Protector General of Emigrants in Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs.

The Centre has cancelled the order of appointment of T Vijayakumar, a 1983 batch IAS officer of Andhra Pradesh cadre, as Additional Secretary in Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD).

His batch-mate Nutan Guha Biswas has been appointed as new Additional Secretary in MoWCD for a period of four years from the date of assumption of charge of the post.

Ashok M R Dalawai has been appointed as Additional Secretary in Department of Agriculture and Cooperation.

Dalawai, who is presently Deputy Director General in UIDAI, has been appointed for the balance period of central deputation tenure i.e. upto April 29, 2017.

COMMUNICATION

HINDU, APR 10, 2015

Roaming calls to be cheaper from May 1

YUTHIKA BHARGAVA

From next month, mobile phone users will be charged less for national roaming calls. While outgoing roaming calls will be cheaper by up to 23 per cent, SMS will cost about 75 per cent less.

Roaming charges are paid by subscribers when using services outside their home telecom circle.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India reduced the ceiling tariff for outgoing local calls during roaming to 80 paise a minute from Re. 1. STD call rates have been cut to Rs 1.15 a minute from Rs 1.50. For incoming calls, it has been brought down to 45 paise a minute from 75 paise now. Likewise, operators can now charge a maximum of 25 paise and 38 paise for every outgoing local and STD messages on roaming.

The changes will come into effect from May 1, 2015.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

BUSINESS STANDARD, APR 9, 2015

Shankar Acharya: How fast is India growing?

The puzzle regarding the new estimates of national income and growth is a strictly 'made-in-CSO' conundrum

Shankar Acharya

How fast is the [Indian economy](#) growing? What is the sectoral composition or structure of the economy? How fast are major sectors expanding? Until two months ago, we thought we had a pretty good idea. Not so after January 30, 2015, when the [Central Statistical Office](#) (CSO) released its newly based estimates of national income and growth. Changes in base year are normal and happen every seven or eight years to accommodate fresh data sources, changes in economic structure and methodological improvements. But this time (unlike ever before) the results of the base change, from 2004-05 to 2011-12, have led to substantial bemusement, bordering on incredulity, among many economists and analysts, including many in the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). What are some of the key issues and questions? Before we get into these, it is important to emphasise one point: there is no evidence of any of political agenda behind this puzzling exercise. Government and central bank officials seem as surprised and perplexed as those outside. It's a strictly "made-in-CSO" conundrum.

Economic growth

The growth story of the past dozen years, according to the old (2004-05) base, is well-known: the unprecedented nine-per-cent-a-year boom of 2003-04 to 2007-08; a dip below seven per cent in 2008-09 following the global financial crisis and associated global recession; a smart recovery in 2009-10 and 2010-11, followed by a steep slowdown from 2011-12 onwards, yielding two successive years of below-five-per-cent growth in 2012-13 and 2013-14, for the first time in 25 years. As the table shows, the new data tell a very different story for the three most recent years, the only three for which the [CSO](#) has given estimates according to the new 2011-12 base. Yes, 2012-13 growth is still below five percent, but then there is a surprising rebound to 6.6 per cent in 2013-14 (6.9 per cent as measured by gross domestic product, or GDP, in market prices) and a further acceleration to 7.5 per cent in 2014-15 according to the "advance estimates".

It is these last two years, 2013-14 and 2014-15, (averaging seven per cent growth according to the new base) that do not square with all the other available indicators: almost no industrial expansion according to the Index of Industrial Production, or IIP (also produced by the CSO!); sluggish growth in tax revenues; lacklustre corporate earnings; slowing bank credit expansion (down to its lowest level in 21 years in 2014-15); slowing investment and exports; a weak employment market; ... and so on. A growth rebound in 2013-14 is particularly puzzling, since that was the year when India experienced a mini balance-of-payments crisis (with significant outflows of capital) and a 300-basis-point policy interest rate hike during the second quarter. To my knowledge, nowhere else have such unpleasant events spurred significant economic recovery!

Sectoral composition and growth

The first two columns of the table compare the shares of some major sectors in GDP according to the two bases. Here are some noteworthy points:

n For years, policymakers and analysts have bemoaned the low share of manufacturing in India's GDP, below 15 per cent according to the familiar 2004-05 base. The new base tells us that the problem is perhaps not quite that bad, since it gives a share of 18 per cent. Apparently, this change is mainly due to sourcing industrial data from the ministry of corporate affairs database on some 500,000 company accounts (the MCA-21 data) for the first time. This may well be an improvement on past practice. The problem is that a non-official member of the relevant CSO sub-committee, Professor R Nagaraj, has just published an article in the latest (March 28, 2015) issue of the respected *Economic and Political Weekly*, raising serious issues with the manner in which the CSO has used this data

n Thanks mainly to the availability of new sample data for 2010-2011, collected by the National Sample Survey, the estimated share of wholesale and retail trade (and hotels and restaurants) has declined sharply from over 17 per cent of GDP according to the old base to 11 per cent in the new base

n On the other hand, the share of "finance, real estate and business services" in GDP has risen in the new base by a couple of percentage points to 19 per cent.

The new data also show remarkably higher growth rates for two key sectors,

manufacturing and trade/hotels/restaurants, in recent years, as compared with the estimates according to the 2004-05 base ([CHANGES IN GROWTH AND SECTORAL SHARES OF GDP](#)). Thus, manufacturing is shown to be growing at five to seven per cent in 2012-2015, a good four to six per cent higher than estimated previously. As in the case of overall GDP, such robust rates of growth sit awkwardly with trends in all other known indicators, such as tax receipts, bank credit, the IIP, corporate earnings and employment. Is this because of infirmities in the use of MCA-21 data?

The same uncomfortable disparities arise with the trade/hotels/restaurants sector. According to the old base, this sector barely managed one per cent growth in 2013-14. In contrast, the new base has it growing at above 13 per cent in the same year!

One could go on with raising more issues and puzzles. The real issue is, what is to be done?

The way forward

It is clear that the new estimates of national income and growth do not readily pass the "smell test". Before they become the foundation of analytical descriptions and projections of the current, the past and the future trends in the Indian economy, a few things have to be done (most of which should have been done before publication of the new data series). Most importantly, the new methodology and the numbers it has yielded need to be subject to serious, independent, professional scrutiny. It is understood that the National Statistical Commission has been entrusted with such a review. That is certainly an important start. Second, before the commission delivers its report (assuming it has been tasked to prepare one), it should organise one or more conferences of independent professional statisticians and economists on the matter. Third, before any further publication of any revisions to the latest data, it might be wise to compile the "back series" (for at least 10-15 years) according to the new methodology. All this will entail hard work and discomfort for all concerned. But surely, it is necessary and worthwhile to restore credibility to India's national income and growth estimates.

Till such review and revision are complete, we really can't be too sure about India's current, past and prospective growth rates. My own circumspect answer to the question in the title is that if India's GDP grew at around 5.5 per cent in 2014-15 according to the old

base, it will probably register six per cent plus growth in 2015-16 according to the same yardstick. Not stellar, but better than nearly all other large economies in today's world.

The writer is honorary professor at Icrier and former chief economic advisor. These views are his own

STATESMAN, APR 10, 2015

Is Bengal in India?

Gyan Ranjan Saha

When in 2004, the Union Government decided to shift the Defined Benefit Pension Scheme in respect of its employees to Defined Contribution Pension Scheme, it was accepted by most of the States and UTs, with occasional hiccups, except Left-ruled West Bengal, Tripura and Kerala. Now, even Tripura and UDF-ruled Kerala have agreed to fall in line.

The West Bengal government continues to pursue its earlier path despite a change of dispensation in 2011. Similarly, the resistance of this state to the adoption of the SEZ policy as well as abolition of the Urban Land Ceiling Act 1976 continues despite the fact that most states have agreed to follow the lead of the Union government in this respect.

While Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and even one of the so-called BIMARU states like Madhya Pradesh have moved miles ahead, West Bengal is languishing in its own self-created mess with no visible sign of industrial progress.

Whatever development has taken place in the sphere of IT and ITES industries in the state has happened in the pre-parivartan era.

The promised expansion of TCS, Infosys, Wipro and even the much-maligned Satyam, now Tech Mahindra, has remained a dream. People of this state have been surviving on a diet of publicity without any tangible evidence that the industrial resurgence, which was the bedrock of the pre-poll manifesto of the new regime, has attained fruition.

It was promised that every district of the state would have a software park. We are still waiting for these parks to come up. There is a palpable reluctance on the part of the state to actively participate in the activities mandated by the Union government. Bengal has stayed away from NITI meetings.

The plea advanced is that since the Planning Commission was a monument to Subhas Chandra Bose's economic philosophy, its demise was an affront to his memory. Nothing could be more outrageous and historically incorrect.

The state has reservations even about the non-partisan plans and programmes devised by the Centre. The Centre has refused to waive the debts and grant a moratorium on the interest payments.

The issue raises a fundamental question. If such remissions as demanded by the state are conceded, then the very concept of Constitutional governance becomes vulnerable. The country has consciously agreed to be governed by democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution which envisage a continuity of contracts and property rights irrespective of the fact as to which party's government was responsible.

In a democratic polity like India, governments can periodically change, depending on the choice of the electorate. If a successor government belonging to a party other than the earlier one moves to repudiate the contracts entered into by the earlier government, the whole financial architecture of statecraft will be demolished.

Even in Hindu shastric law, an heir has to honour the debts of his father irrespective of the reason for which the debt was incurred. The insistence of the state government on a debt-waiver is a singularly inappropriate demand. The remedy is to follow austerity in expenditure till such time as finances are stabilised. There is a persistent cavil about the country being governed by the principles of federalism. Two expressions have gained significant traction in political discourse -- cooperative federalism and competitive federalism.

West Bengal is in the vanguard of the campaign. In the Constitution, there is no direct and explicit mention of this issue except in Article 1, which states that India is a Union of States. This is in stark contrast to what was provided in the Government of India Act 1935, which provided the theoretical and structural framework of the Constitution, specifically that India was a federal state with a federal government, federal assembly, federal court and various federal authorities.

The classical philosophy of a federal polity, however, does not apply to post-independence India because it was not born with the same principles that underpin a federal state. Constitutional experts have always accepted that though India has adopted

the principles of a federal structure, there is always a visible bias of a strong Union in the Constitution.

It needs to be stressed that unless this bias is removed, India cannot be classified as a truly federal country. Different states tend to interpret federalism differently. For a state like West Bengal, it means that while an everincreasing demand for central financial subvention is justified, there is also a concomitant demand for administrative freedom to splurge.

And most particularly on popular programmes which enhance the personal image of the rulers and boost their electoral prospects disregarding the norms of financial propriety and economic viability. Such sectoral, partisan and ethically indefensible considerations can drive the state to ultimate disaster.

The sooner this warning is realised the better for the people of the state and its future generations. A state cannot exist in isolation till such time it is able to achieve political and economic dis-aggregation from the Centre and snaps its umbilical cord with the Union.

The Constitution does not provide for any such contingency. That brings us to the concept of cooperative federalism. In order to survive as an integral part of the country, there has to be an absolute and clear understanding between the states and the Centre. It would be unwise and impractical to proceed at cross-purposes.

Also, it would be imperative for any state to discard the “us-they” conflict and shun the idea that there is any enmity between the states and the Centre. It would be instructive to look at the US political system where the central legislature and the state legislatures may belong to different parties, but the inbuilt mechanism of checks and balances and clear demarcation of authority and powers do not lead to any conflicting situation.

Similarly in India, the areas demarcating the authorities and powers of the Centre and the states are precisely laid down. It would thus be indefensible to visualise a hypothetical situation where a state accuses the Union of stepmotherly treatment and if such a situation comes to pass, the earliest it is resolved the better for the overall health of the country. Notably, there have been instances of strong and acerbic remonstrations on some specific issues between this state and the Union. Some of these relate to international obligations and concerns.

Lack of coordination and consultation are matters that can be easily tackled if wisdom wins over cheap and partisan posturing. International riparian disputes are one such area. If the Union and a constituent state think and move at cross-purposes, the ultimate loser is the country. Similarly, consider a situation where the Union wants to set up an establishment in the state to confront cross-border terrorism and the state declines to come on board due to its stated land policy.

The damage will be to the country as a whole and not confined to the state. We have witnessed such instances in the past. It would be worth recalling the poem, *The Second Coming* written by WB Yeats after the end of the First World War -- Turning and turning in the widening gyre/the Falcon cannot hear the falconer/Things fall apart, the centre cannot hold/Mere anarchy is loosened upon the world/...The best lack all conviction, while the worst/Are full of passionate intensity. And then, Surely some revelation is at hand/Surely the Second Coming is at hand.

EDUCATION

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 9, 2015

Language row: HRD Ministry seeks quid pro quo, wants Germans to learn Hindi

By [Ritika Chopra](#)

Six months after it discontinued German as a third language in the state-run KVs and triggered a minor diplomatic standoff by the abruptness of the move.

NEW DELHI: Want kids in our schools to learn German? Get your kids to learn Hindi. If Hindi is a problem, any other Indian language will do.

This quid pro quo will form the basis of the government's offer to Germany to tamp down the diplomatic kerfuffle caused by the human resource development ministry's surprise decision last year to discontinue German being taught in Kendriya Vidyalaya (KV) schools across the country.

Six months after it discontinued German as a third language in the state-run KVs and triggered a minor diplomatic standoff by the abruptness of the move, the Smriti Irani-led ministry has come up with this solution ahead of the PM's visit to Germany for the world's largest industrial fair, Hanover Messe, this month.

The new agreement, which has been vetted by the external affairs ministry, seeks to introduce an element of 'reciprocity' into the equation under which German will be taught as an optional subject in KVs and the [Indian government](#), in exchange, will expect an equal number of schools in Germany to start classes in Hindi or any other Indian language.

According to ministry sources, the government will run the new terms of agreement with its interlocutors on the German side in a day or two. The government's proposed memorandum of understanding (MoU), however, does not offer any specifics on how many schools in Germany will have to teach Indian languages. It also does not commit any expenditure to train teachers in German schools.

These details, ministry officials told ET, will be worked out later. The fresh MoU, which will be signed by the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan and the Goethe-Institut, has been drafted after MEA asked [HRD ministry](#) last December to sort out all outstanding issues over the German language controversy fearing that it could cast a shadow over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Berlin.

India is the chief guest at the Hanover fair — the US and China were in preceding years — and the Prime Minister's Office considers the event crucial to the government's 'Make in India' initiative.

ET had first reported on January 1 that former foreign secretary [Sujatha Singh](#) had, in a two-page letter, asked the then HRD secretary R Bhattacharya to resume talks with the

German side and come good on the assurance given by Modi to Chancellor [Angela Merkel](#) on the sidelines of the G20 meeting in Brisbane on November 16, 2014, and find a way to continue teaching German in KV schools, but not as a third language.

MERKEL TOOK UP ISSUE

The government's diktat discontinuing German as a third language in KVs and replacing it with Sanskrit came in for much criticism and subsequently assumed a diplomatic colour when Merkel took up the issue with Modi. The HRD ministry had justified the move on the ground that a foreign language cannot be taught as a third language subject in schools as it violated the three-language formula enshrined in the national education policy. "The controversy could come up during talks in Germany. Although the MoU will not be signed immediately, we had to ensure that the matter was sorted out and the government had come good on the PM's assurance," said a ministry source.

Germany's Ambassador to India [Michael Steiner](#) was not immediately available for comment. However, at a public event on Wednesday, he reiterated his stand on the issue and said the [Supreme Court](#) has allowed teaching of German language in KVs from class VI to VIII and the government should implement the order. "In December last year, the court had provided a very good solution for a pragmatic outcome which would allow to continue to teach German in KV schools," he told reporters.

"It is also possible to teach German in classes IX-X. Under the current situation, I think what we need is the implementation of what the court has said."

INDIAN EXPRESS, APR 10, 2015

Govt schools lack sufficient science laboratories, computers, libraries, books: NCERT survey

Ifrah Mufti

Government schools in the city do not have sufficient science laboratories, computers and libraries and books; nor do they have trained education counsellors for students, according to a survey conducted by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

The survey, which is part of NCERT's All India Educational Surveys, has found that of the 70 secondary government schools in the city, only 41 comply with the CBSE norm which says that there should be a proper library in every school and at least 1,500 books should be there in the beginning.

Other schools have 500 to 1,000 books in their libraries.

Also, only 29 schools have full-time librarians while in others teachers have to act as part-time librarians.

At the higher secondary stage, all 55 schools have libraries but only 35 of them have over 2,000 books and 49 have full-time librarians.

Only 50 of the 70 secondary schools have science laboratories. Only 48 of them provide computer education, with just 45 computers in total.

In the higher secondary schools, however, all 55 have science laboratories, and 54 provide computer education with 49 computers.

Another major problem which the UT Education Department has failed to solve is the absence of counsellors in government schools for educational and vocational guidance. The survey says that only 17 schools in the city provide educational and vocational guidance to students while only 11 have 'trained' counsellors.

In the 55 higher secondary schools, 28 provide educational guidance and 16 of them have trained counsellors.

All India Educational Surveys are conducted periodically by NCERT to collect, compile and disseminate information on the country's overall progress in the area of school education. The surveys provide basic inputs to develop educational plans at micro level as well as at macro level, help formulate educational policies, and monitor the progress of various educational schemes of the Central and state governments.

The surveys cover availability of schooling facilities, physical and educational facilities in schools, incentive schemes and beneficiaries, medium of instruction and languages taught, enrolment particularly of SCs, STs, girls and educationally backward minority community, teachers and their academic and professional qualifications.

[TELEGRAPH, APR 9, 2015](#)

**Teachers at Irani door for PhD relief
- 1000 ad hoc teachers face uncertainty after SC validates retrospective UGC bar
Basant Kumar Mohanty**

New Delhi, April 8: Delhi University teachers who face the sack after a Supreme Court judgment last month validated a UGC order, which retrospectively debars PhD-holders from teaching jobs if their doctorate programme wasn't verifiably rigorous enough, are knocking on the doors of Smriti Irani.

Nearly a thousand ad hoc teachers, whose services are renewed every semester, might not get a fresh term at the university after the court order last month.

The court upheld the University Grants Commission regulation on minimum qualification for appointment of teachers in colleges and universities. According to that regulation, the candidates need to have passed the National Eligibility Test or the State Level Eligibility Test (SLET) to be appointed as assistant professors. Only those who had got PhD degrees in line with the norms laid down by the UGC in 2009 would get exemption from NET and SLET.

Till 2009, all PhD-holders were eligible for teachers' jobs even if they lacked NET/SLET qualification. In view of complaints that many universities were lowering the standards of PhD programmes, the UGC in 2009 for the first time set a uniform standard for the award of MPhil and PhD degrees.

The regulation said that existing PhD-holders would become ineligible for teaching posts unless the institutions that had awarded them the doctorates certified that they had followed the just-prescribed standards.

This regulation attracted criticism from universities across the country for its retrospective implementation. The UGC then set up an anomaly committee to review its own regulation. Following the report of the committee, the UGC last year amended the norms and decided to exempt those who had obtained their PhD degrees before 2009. But the revised regulation is still to be approved by the HRD ministry. The apex court ruling in the meantime has added to the confusion.

The apex court has said the HRD ministry and UGC are apex policy makers in these matters and their norms should be followed. Sources in the ministry said there was no clarity yet whether the revised regulation would be approved.

About 600 of the Delhi University ad hoc teachers who will be affected wrote to Union HRD minister Irani on Monday seeking relief.

Rajesh Kumar Jha, a teacher leader from the university, said the ministry must intervene and ask UGC to allow exemptions to pre-2009 PhD-holders from NET/SLET. "The UGC has given exemption from NET/SLET to PhD-holders so many times. We demand it to extend the exemption," Jha said.

Saikat Ghosh, a teacher at the university, said the UGC regulation of 2009 has provisions like course work of six months, evaluation of the thesis by external examiners, and not more than 10 students under one research guide.

Of the nearly 4,000 ad hoc teachers in Delhi University colleges, about a thousand do not have NET/SLET qualification or PhD in line with the 2009 regulation.

The regulation will affect thousands of ad hoc teachers across universities.

Ghosh said colleges may not renew their contract in the coming semester and pointed out that Daulat Ram College has already come out with a notification saying it would recruit only in line with the UGC guideline.

UGC chairman Ved Prakash would not comment. When contacted, he said: "I am in a meeting."

TRIBUNE, APR 9, 2015

**Relieve all guest faculty teachers above 58 yrs: DSE
Sat Singh**

The Director Secondary Education (DSE), Panchkula, has directed the Education Department to immediately relieve guest faculty teachers, who have completed 58 years of age.

According to the letter sent to all district education officers and elementary education officers, the DSE has directed them to identify guest faculty teachers, who have completed 58 years of age and are still in service.

The DSE has said they should be relieved forthwith and the responsibility for their continuance in service should be fixed. The information, compliance report in this regard along with names of the officers/officials responsible, if any, may be sent to the directorate upto April 9, positively, it said.

The letter also said as per the instructions issued by the state Chief Secretary, dated November 26, 2014, the date of superannuation (retirement) in the state is 58 years except in case of judicial officers, group iv, physically disabled/challenged employees and blind employees, in which case the it has been prescribed as 60 years.

EMINENT PERSONALITIES

STATESMAN, APR 15, 2015

Ambedkar the economist

Dilip Halder

The conspicuous absence of Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar's economic thought in celebrated works of eminent Indian economic historians begs a question. Ambedkar's identity as an economist might have escaped their notice because of his fame as the chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution and as a leader of the backward and downtrodden sections of Indian society. This may be true in case of ordinary citizens of India, but surely not an acceptable alibi from any serious researcher in the area of Indian economic thought.

However, of late Amartya Sen has recognised Ambedkar as the father of his economics (May 2007). This recognition might hopefully inspire economic historians to have fresh look at Ambedkar's works with unbiased minds. However, the present discussion is devoted to pointing out in brief the different dimensions of Ambedkar's identity as an economist.

Ambedkar's life time (14 April 1891-6 December 1956) starts from the last decade of the 19th century and extends up to a little after the mid-20th century. He was born in an untouchable 'Mahar' family in Mhaw in Madhya Pradesh and had a childhood of struggle for being untouchable and poor. The opportunity of having higher education in USA and England in Economics and various other subjects in social sciences and law equipped him intellectually to study contemporary socio-economic problems that emanated from a hierarchical social structure under an exploitative foreign rule. His probing analysis of the social order and the nature of exploitation perpetrated by the traditional social system was not only revealing but helped suggest pragmatic remedial measures which, due to lack of implementation, could not produce desired results, neither in his time nor thereafter. His analytical faculty and pragmatic approach could be understood for the first time in his 42-page research paper entitled Administration and Finance of the East India Company submitted in Columbia University as the dissertation for MA (Economics) degree in 1915. This dissertation offers a historical account of the administration and finances of the East India Company and brings out economic and legal implications which ran counter to the interest of Indians.

An important finding of this study made him score above RC Dutta's analytical faculty. It is regarding the heavy tribute that India had to pay regularly to Britain by way of "home charges" which was entirely the creation of war and was illegitimate. The act of 1858,

which goes by the name “Act for better government of India”, states that: “the revenues of India shall not, without the previous consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operations carried on beyond the external frontiers of such possessions by her Majesty’s forces charged upon such revenues”.

This provision of the act was used by many scholars in India including RC Dutta to justify this heavy tribute by India as salutary financial provision. The basic drawback of this justification, according to Ambedkar, lies on two crucial points (i) the revenues of India ‘have been spent outside India for non-indian purpose, even after the Act’ and (ii) ‘the fatal error lay in this, - the excepting clause in the above section which sanctions the expenditure of Indian revenue outside of India omits the vital word “previous”. To have any salutary impact previous consent of the Parliament is a necessary requirement. The previous consent was not taken. This escaped the notice of everybody including Indian scholars. This finding of Ambedkar’s work not only established his identity as a brilliant analytical economic historian but as a bold, patriotic Indian as well.

The other work on economics was entitled Provincial Finance in British India, which was his Ph.D. thesis in Columbia University USA in 1917, and was published in book form in 1925. It was considered to be a basic contribution to the theory of public finance. To be more specific it dealt with Centre-state financial relationship in British India covering the period 1833 to 1921. This probing analysis was highly acclaimed all over the world.

Professor Dr Edwin Robert Anderson Seligman, the then Professor of Political Economy, Columbia University, New York, an authority on the subject, editor in chief of Encyclopedia of Social Sciences and one of the founder members of American Economic Association, commented that, “the value of Mr Ambedkar’s contribution to this discussion lies in the objective recitation of the facts and the impartial analysis of the interesting development that has taken place in his native country. The lessons are applicable to the other countries as well; nowhere, to my knowledge, has such a detailed study of underlying principles been made”.

The inquiry into the causes of financial malady of British India and the suggestion of sharing the financial responsibility by the Centre and provinces were really commendable. Apart from the international recognition of Ambedkar’s thesis at that time his ideas even today go a long way in determining the federal structure that has been adopted by different nations including India. It may be mentioned here that the Finance Commission, which is appointed for five years as per the Constitutional provision, is the

result of Ambedkar's thesis. This, in a sense, is considered a permanent solution to the complicated issue that was associated with the Centre-state relationship. This is no doubt a significant contribution to the theory of public finance and more specifically to the theory of federal finance.

A significant contribution is his celebrated book entitled *The Problem of the Rupee: Its origin and Its Solution*, published in 1923. Before its publication London School of Economics had awarded him D.Sc. degree in economics in 1921. The second edition of the book was published in 1947. This book shows that he was an authority in economic policy and currency problems. He analysed very meticulously the problem of Indian currency from 1800 to 1920 and suggested a currency system for India. In so doing he sharply differed with the idea of John Maynard Keynes.

Ambedkar advocated the gold-standard and Keynes prescribed goldexchange-standard in his treatise entitled '*Indian Currency and Finance*' published in the year 1909. Ambedkar argued in favour of gold-standard because in this system the supply of currency cannot be so easily made and as such it better insures stability of prices and so that poorer sections would get relief. Though Ambedkar's suggestion was not taken up by the Imperial Government, his intention of protecting the interests of the poor is clear.

Ambedkar submitted interesting evidence to the Royal Commission on Indian Currency and Finance when he appeared before it on 5 December 1925. This contribution might have gone a long way to establishment of the Reserve Bank of India

Though Ambedkar could not bring out the second edition, his idea of economics actually permeated through his programmes of action in the field of politics. His identity as an economist did not get diluted because of the diverse activities he was engaged with during the rest of his life. Ambedkar knew that India was predominantly an agricultural economy, that 80 per cent of the population lived in villages, agriculture was their main occupation and they were not economically well off. He believed that rural poverty should be eradicated. Towards this end, he organised mass movements and had reasonable success.

The abolition of "Khoti" system (1949) 'Mahar Vatan', (1959) and introduction of The Bombay Money Lenders' Bill (1938) stand out as distinct success stories of his movement. In some parts of Konkan region of Maharashtra, 'Khots' (like Zaminders) had rights to land, which were cultivated by farmers from whom the Khots would collect

revenue, a part of which was shared with the government. This was called the Khoti system and it subjected the vast majority of rural farmers to oppression and exploitation. Ambedkar initiated a movement against this system on 14 April 1929 in an Agricultural Conference in Chiplun of Ratnagiri District. In 1936, he founded independent labour party and its manifesto gave high priority to the abolition of the 'Khoti' system. On 17 September 1937, a historic bill for abolition of the Khoti system was introduced by Ambedkar in Bombay Legislative Council. After a long struggle the Khoti system was abolished in 1949.

The 'Mahar Vatan' system was an outcome of The Bombay Hereditary Offices Act (1874), which was used to exploit rural poor of the 'Mahar' caste. Mahars used to hold very low-level government jobs, mostly odd jobs of all government departments round the clock. In fact, these Mahars and their families were at the beck and call of government officers for 24 hours without any defined task. The range of their jobs included removal of carcasses to running with the tonga of officers throughout their journey. In return Mahars were given a piece of land called 'Vatan' to be cultivated by them, and a part of the produce was passed on to the government as 'Baluta'. Sometimes, a paltry sum of money used to be given by way of wage. This remuneration was not regular and officers would increase or decrease the sum – and the size of the land – arbitrarily. This inhuman exploitation was perpetrated by giving them an ego-boosting description like 'Vatandars' (which means landlords) and in turn they were saddled with heavy duties.

As Labour Member of Viceroy's Executive Council from 1942 to 1946, Ambedkar introduced a number of welfare measures for the working class of India. Notable among them are establishment of employment exchanges, machinery for fixation of minimum remuneration, tripartite dispute settlement mechanism, fixation of working hours, working conditions, maternity leave, leave with pay etc. which, even today offers a safety net to labourers. These labour welfare measures take care of not only the productivity of labour, but insurance of the claim of legitimate share of labour in the total production or income of the industry. In a sense, it takes care of growth and development as well. Higher productivity of labour means the growth of income and legitimate share of the labour means more equitable distribution of income and less inequality of distribution, which in turns means development. Ambedkar, a man educated in USA and UK, was not an armchair economist. He was an economist in thought and action with a rare vision.

The writer is a former professor and head of department of economics, Jadavpur University

ELECTIONS

HINDU, APR 13, 2015

Election Commission sets up committee to allow migrants to vote

KRISHNADAS RAJAGOPAL

After the government's green light to NRIs to cast their votes from abroad, the Election Commission has set up a committee of senior officers to consider whether electoral laws can be changed to empower voters who have migrated to other States within the country.

The poll body is considering whether inter-State migrant voters could retain their names on the electoral rolls of their native places, and also, if they could cast their votes through mechanisms such as postal ballot.

Under the present law, a person can be enrolled only at the place he is residing. A migrant has to get himself enrolled in the new place.

A relaxation of this law would prove beneficial to cadre-based parties in keeping their vote bank intact, especially in States such as Kerala and Tamil Nadu where many youths are migrating to other States for jobs.

In an affidavit filed before the Supreme Court, the poll body said the committee was set up despite scepticism about the need to amend the Representation of the People Act. The poll body was responding to a notice issued by the Supreme Court on January 12, 2015, on a plea made by UAE-based doctor Shamsheer V.P., represented by senior advocate Dushyant Dave and advocate Haris Beeran, demanding electoral reforms to allow inter-State migrants the voting privileges like postal ballot, which is accorded to government servants.

The commission said a person who migrated can be considered "ordinarily resident" in his new place even without owning or possessing a house there. It said the law was reasonable as it is now.

The application filed by Dr. Shamsheer sought the same voting privileges accorded to government servants under Section 20(8) (d) of the Representation of the People Act, 1950, read with Section 60(b) of the Representation of the People Act 1951, which allowed them to vote via postal ballot upon the consent of the Election Commission.

Relaxation of the present law will benefit parties to keep vote bank intact

EMPLOYMENT

HINDU, APR 9, 2015

India will be able to create 109.7 mn jobs by 2022: study

PUJA MEHRA

India will be able to create only 109.7 million jobs by 2022, latest estimates and studies on sector-wise human resource and skill requirements, commissioned by the newly-created Skills Ministry, show.

An earlier official estimate said that by 2022, India will have to impart skills training to 500 million people. Union Minister for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajiv Pratap Rudy will release the new estimates on Thursday.

The estimate of 109.7 million jobs is for India's qualitative skill gap in key job roles, explained a government source. "It is a demand-side projection from the industry's point of view... it is different from the estimate of the labour-supply side for the need for jobs that was earlier projected at 500 million," the source said.

The studies for calculating India's Skill Gap were undertaken in the wake of the launch of the Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana that the Union Cabinet headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved last month. They involve mapping of top job roles in 24 sectors including unorganised parts and also of current supply infrastructure (both private and public)- capacity, quality and challenges. Government schemes for skill development for the sector were also factored into the assessment.

The Modi government's skills initiative is central to the success of the Prime Minister's other pet schemes such as Make in India and Digital India.

The studies have made recommendations for government, training partners, industry and the National Skills Development Council.

GOVERNORS

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 13, 2015

Governors now need President's nod to travel

Every request will also have to be marked to the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra and Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

NEW DELHI: The Centre has put restrictions on the travel of governors saying they have to stay in their respective states for at least 292 days in a year and not leave station until or unless approved by the President.

The fresh diktat from the Narendra Modi government came after it was noticed that some of the governors used to stay outside their respective states for a considerable amount of time.

"No visits shall be undertaken without obtaining the prior permission of the [President](#) or in emergent or extraordinary circumstances, without prior intimation to the President's Secretariat," the new 18-point set of rules notified by Home Ministry said.

In case of last-minute travel plans, governors will have to explain the "compelling reasons" for the trip. The requests for permission to travel outside the state will have to be sent to Rashtrapati Bhavan anywhere between one week and six weeks before the date of travel, depending on whether the tour is official or private and the destination is in India or abroad.

Every request will also have to be marked to the Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Nripendra Misra and Union [Home Minister](#) Rajnath Singh.

To ensure any [governor](#) does not pass off private visits as official, the Raj Bhavans will have to send their detailed itinerary to the President for every official visit -- domestic or foreign -- and keep Rashtrapati Bhavan posted about any changes.

"The duration of such visits of the governor shall not exceed 20 per cent of the days in a calender year," the notification said.

In case of foreign visits, the communication seeking approval of the President for undertaking such foreign visits shall be received in President's Secretariat at least six weeks in advance.

"Governor shall invariably obtain clearance under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and political clearance before undertaking the foreign visit," it said.

The new rules were notified after several instances of governors abusing their privileges came to light, sources said.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

INDIAN EXPRESS, APR 10, 2015

Modi and the middle powers

As the first Indian prime minister to visit Canada on bilateral business in more than four decades, Modi has much catching up to do. (Illustration: C R Sasikumar)

C Raja Mohan

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to France, Germany and Canada beginning Thursday should help New Delhi consolidate three of India's very special relationships. France was the first Western power to become a strategic partner for India and can now turbocharge India's high technology sectors. Germany is an economic powerhouse with growing political clout in Europe and beyond. Canada and India are colonial cousins, with a shared Anglo-Saxon political heritage and massive economic synergies. Canada is also home to one of our most important overseas communities.

Until now, Modi has been preoccupied with rejuvenating ties with America and China. He has had two quick summits with US President Barack Obama and is preparing for the second round with Chinese President Xi Jinping next month in Beijing. The Modi government has also sought to improve relations with neighbours in the subcontinent and reconnect with the extended neighbourhood in Asia and the Indian Ocean.

Under Modi's "Act East Policy", India has intensified engagement with key regional powers like Japan, South Korea, Vietnam and Australia. More recently, Modi had a successful "Sagar Yatra" to Seychelles, Mauritius and Sri Lanka. The same, however, cannot be said about other regions of the world, including Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the Americas beyond the US.

Modi's visit to Europe and Canada should help restore some balance to India's international engagement. India is preparing to host the Africa Summit later this year and

raise its game in the Middle East, where political turbulence is shaking up the old regional order. If geographic regions are one way of organising foreign policy, there is no substitute for boosting bilateral ties to a few pivotal countries around the world, three of which are on Modi's itinerary this week.

All three are Western middle powers. Despite their longstanding alliances with America, all three of them have their own national interests and have often pursued policies independent of Washington. Acutely aware of this reality, China has invested significant amount of time and energy in cultivating the middle powers of the West, despite many differences over ideology and policy. The recent European stampede to join China's Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, despite American opposition, reflects the depth of realpolitik among the Western middle powers.

If the Indian strategic community tends to think of the multipolar world as an anti-Western platform, China has rightly seen the idea as an instrument to explore the strategic possibilities within the West and build separate partnerships with each of the middle powers. India's first prime minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, did not view the world in anti-Western terms despite his invention of non-alignment.

Nehru argued against postwar Germany being treated like an enemy state at the United Nations. French Gaullism helped create space for India amidst an all-encompassing rivalry between America and Russia. Genuine commitment to liberal internationalism brought Nehru close to the Canadian prime minister, Lester Pearson, and together they sought to strengthen the UN and international norms at the height of the Cold War.

The end of the Cold War and India's economic globalisation created a lot more room for India's engagement with the Western middle powers, especially in the last decade. But

the UPA government was unable to seize the moment and turn new opportunities into tangible outcomes.

Despite the fact that Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper has travelled twice to India in the last few years and invested much political capital in transforming the bilateral relationship, Canada hardly figured on India's political radar. That resource-rich Canada would be a natural partner for mineral-hungry India seemed to make no difference to Delhi's political approach to Ottawa.

Harper had overruled the strong nuclear nonproliferation community in Canada to put an end to the prolonged atomic dispute with India that began after Delhi's lone nuclear test in 1974 and cast a shadow over political ties. Harper's Ottawa also became one of the first countries to sign a civil nuclear cooperation agreement with India. He also agreed to reasonable terms on monitoring the uranium bought from Canada.

As the first Indian prime minister to visit Canada on bilateral business in more than four decades, Modi has much catching up to do. The PM's decision to travel to Canada in the very first year of his tenure signals the recognition that India must not only value its friends but also show its political appreciation. Modi's now standard outreach to the diaspora during his travels abroad will have an additional dimension in Canada — to end the alienation of the Canadian Sikh community from India.

The problem with France and Germany has not been a lack of high-level interaction over the last decade. Both Paris and Berlin have relentlessly pursued cooperation — strategic, economic and political — with India. But the UPA government smothered the possibilities with Paris and Berlin with its lack of political coherence and ceding of strategic decision-making to the bureaucracy.

India is not going to get the best terms from France on the long-pending nuclear and defence deals by letting its accountants run riot. For, the mega deals at hand are not just about buying equipment at the lowest price. They are about leveraging Delhi's purchasing power to expand the defence industrial base, build a modern nuclear industry, strengthen the aerospace sector, and gain access to advanced technologies.

Paris, Berlin and Ottawa can each contribute substantially to the realisation of India's new national goals — from ensuring energy security to creating jobs in the manufacturing sector and addressing climate change to building smart cities. Modi can only unlock the multiple possibilities with these middle powers in the West by injecting a strategic perspective into the talks with the three nations.

The writer is a distinguished fellow at the Observer Research Foundation and a contributing editor for 'The Indian Express'.[...](#)

INTERNET

HINDUSTAN TIMES, APR 14, 2015

Govt may favour net neutrality; final call to be taken in May 2nd week

DK Singh

Amid massive online protests to maintain unhindered access to the internet for all, telecom minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Monday hinted that the government was in support of [net neutrality](#).

However, a final call would be taken after a ministry committee submits its report in the second week of May, he said.

“The internet is one of the finest creations of the human mind. To become global, it must have an integral link to local. I am equally proud of the great role young people have played in the field of net expansion. There must be non-discrimination and digital inclusion,” Prasad told HT.

A citizen campaign to uphold net neutrality (see graphic) in India has taken the web by storm with over 200,000 people — including filmstars and politicians — writing to the country’s telecom regulator, which has come out with a consultation paper ahead of formulating guidelines on the matter.

Activists say net neutrality — an idea that stipulates that companies treat all data as equal so that it is accessible to everyone at the same possible speed and cost — is crucial to keeping the internet a level-playing field and encouraging innovation.

Prasad, however, refused to spell out the government’s stand and said the ministry has already formed a committee that would consult all stakeholders before submitting its report. “The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (Trai) is also considering it. We respect its advisory. We will take a call after we receive the committee report,” he said.

Official sources said the government is conscious of the support for the issue by netizens after certain firms argued that they should be allowed to charge more for certain applications and services.

Activists say such a move would effectively tilt the balance in favour of the bigger players and potentially stifle innovation and growth of start-ups.

In the run up to the last Lok Sabha elections, the BJP successfully mobilised people through social media and the ruling party doesn't want to "let down" its supporters by compromising on net neutrality, sources said. The opposition Congress has also jumped into the debate as it sees an opportunity to wean the "internet generation" away from the BJP.

The debate follows a similar one in the US, where the federal communications commission approved internet rules that prevented broadband providers from separating online traffic into slow and fast lanes.

Prasad has called for an internal report on net neutrality by the second week of May. "I expect a comprehensive report from an internal committee (in the department of telecommunications) that I had set up in January... net neutrality is still evolving, this report will examine all issues concerned."

Trai is also scheduled to come out with its recommendations after April 24, the last date for stakeholders to send their inputs on the issue. A senior communications ministry official said, "As per the Trai Act, the government holds the final decision to accept or reject, partially or in total, the Trai report... it is not binding on the government."

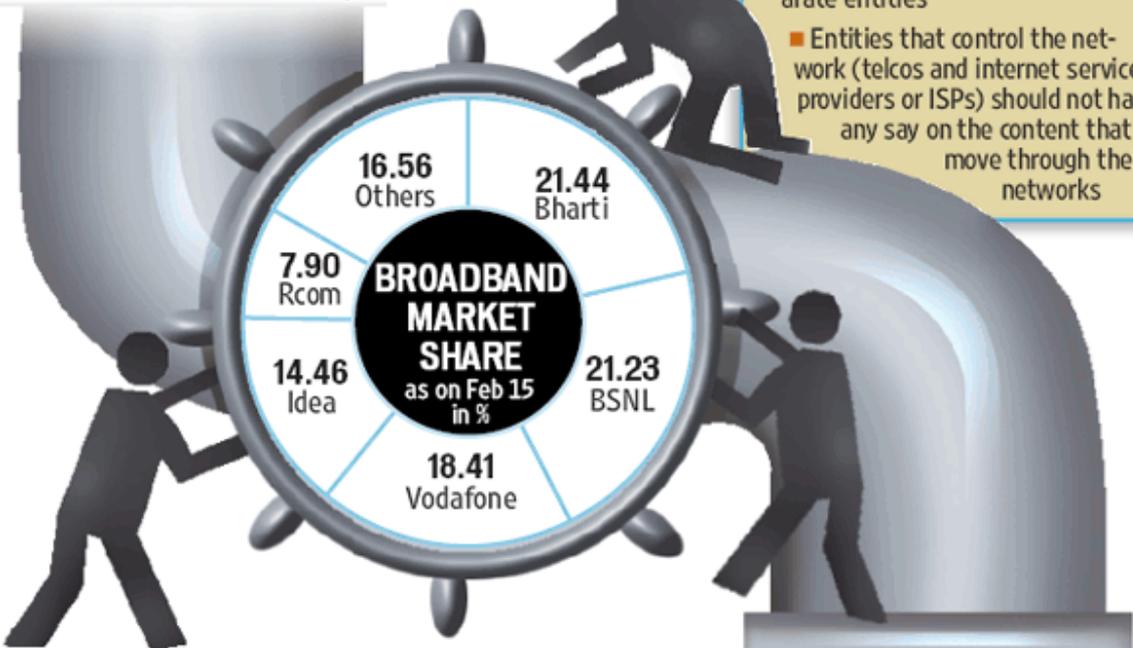
Responding to a question if the issue could reach the courts, with telecom operators differing on the definition of net neutrality, Prasad said, "I cannot stop anyone from going to court."

Legal eagles foresee a judicial solution to the issue of net neutrality, followed by legislative execution. "The telecom regulator can only recommend. The IT Act does not mention anything on net neutrality, the telecom policy on it is ambiguous and there is social concern. The issue is bound to go to courts," said Pawan Duggal, a leading Supreme Court lawyer who specialises in IT.

Telcos have their own argument against the concept. "Will net neutrality imply all devices must be standardised and offered at the same price to make the net neutral?...There are multiple mobile technologies – 2G, 3G, 4G — to access internet. Should all speed and pricing be the same in the garb of net neutrality?" asked Srinivasan Gopalan, director, consumer business, Bharti Airtel.

A TANGLED WEB

India is caught in a fierce debate on allowing internet access unrestricted by operators



'NET NEUTRALITY'

- Net neutrality treats internet as a public utility, and is based on the rule that a network and the data that flows through it are two separate entities
- Entities that control the network (telcos and internet service providers or ISPs) should not have any say on the content that move through their networks

PAID PRIORITISATION

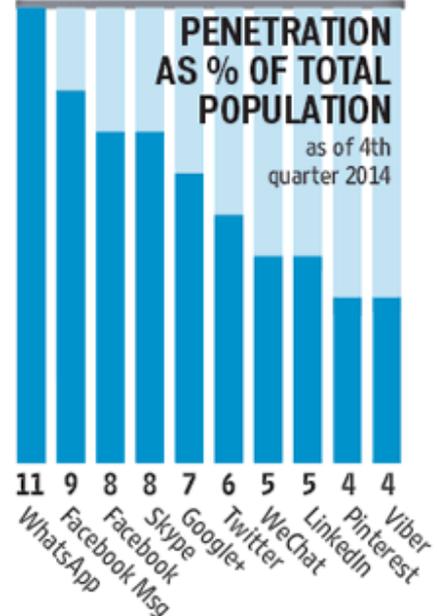
- A student's blog-post should not face slower access than a company's website just because the latter has paid the ISP or the telco through ads or any other form
- An ISP or a telco also can't block or "throttle" or slow down access to a website, so long as the contents are legal

OVER-THE-TOP SERVICES

- Services such as WhatsApp, Viber, Skype, WeChat, Hike are called over-the-top (OTT) services
- Without net neutrality you may end up paying for these

WHY TELCOS ARE OPPOSED

- Telcos, which are also the ISPs, they should earn a pie of the traffic moving through the networks that they have invested huge amounts in setting up
- Services such as WhatsApp have also significantly eroded their SMS and other revenues



TELCO TALK

- Airtel last week announced Airtel Zero, which allows consumers free access to select apps and services such as Flipkart with tie-ups
- There is concern that Airtel customers may face difficulty in accessing competing sites

REGULATORY LENS

- Telecom regulator, Trai, has released a paper inviting comments from users and companies on how Internet apps and services should be regulated
- Report expected next mth

GOVT ACTION

- The govt had set up a panel in January to recommend the position that the government needs to take on net neutrality
- The report is expected in the second week of May

JUDICIARY

STATESMAN, APR 10, 2015

Children of democracy

Kuldip Nayar

Religious sensitivity has deepened since the advent of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's regime. Even though he has underlined the principle of sarva dharma sambhava, parochialism has shown its ugly face in one field or the other.

The judiciary is the only institution that has been above the taint. Nonetheless, the outburst of Supreme Court justice Kurian Joseph shows the pent up feelings of a judge belonging to a minority community. There can be no exception to what he has said, namely, "Our religious and cultural festivals and hues, irrespective of caste and creed, have contributed to the vibrancy of our rich pluralistic culture and ethos.

"The whole world jealously looks at the beauty of the secular image, communal harmony and cultural integrity of our great nation. India must, in these trying times, safeguard her credentials and be a model that other nations must follow." However, I think that he overreacted to the scheduling of annual chief justices' conference on Good Friday.

Chief Justice of India HL Dattu honestly believed that the working of the court would be disturbed because of stretched holidays. He, therefore, decided to utilise the long weekend, which included Good Friday, to hold the conference of state high court chief justices.

Where he went wrong was that he did not fathom the sensitivity of Christian judges or the community. This is not the first time such a conference has been held on Good Friday. But those days the feeling of discrimination was not suspected by minority members.

Now the blatant expression of Hindutva ideology, which the BJP represents and implements, has changed the climate of pluralism that the nation has lived with since independence. True, the country has given the BJP an absolute majority in the Lok Sabha, but this does reflect a change in the thinking of the people, who have been voting for a secular plank until a few years ago.

However, it must be remembered that the basic structure of the Constitution, as defined by the Supreme Court, cannot be changed. One part of that structure is secularism that animates the Constitution. What must be disconcerting for the judiciary is the relentless

effort by extremists to change the very basics of our nationhood. The new terminology like ghar wapsi (reconversion to Hinduism) has been coined to the detriment of pluralism.

The Gita has been introduced in the curriculum of Haryana schools. Churches have been attacked in Delhi, Navi Mumbai and Jabalpur in Madhya Pradesh. There is a ban on beef in Haryana and Maharashtra. After a lot of cajoling, Prime Minister Modi deprecated the attack on churches. Yet the general perception is that he is not against the soft Hindutva that is spreading across the country.

The BJP-run states are worse because they are not on the national radar and attract limited attention. In any case, they are already islands of Hindu chauvinism. The fear among the minorities is, therefore, understandable. I have heard several Muslims saying that they are afraid of their jaan aur maal (life and wealth).

The RSS leaders are sitting pretty and even the liberals in the BJP are mum. They may want the domination of Hindutva ideolog, but it is difficult to imagine they could be in favour of a second class status for Muslims, a flagrant violation of the Constitution that enunciates equality before the law and underlines the principle of one man, one vote. It is incumbent on the Modi government, which represents the majority, that the institutions remain without the taint of communalism. In particular, the judiciary cannot afford to have a finger pointed at it.

The allegation by the Prime Minister that “five-star activists” are driving the courts has only aggravated the situation. The Chief Justice of India has rightly contradicted the statement, adding that the judiciary and Parliament are like “siblings” and must work together “towards a truly and effective administration of justice”. Both the judiciary and Parliament are children of democracy and they have to work hand in hand for a just and egalitarian society. One has to correct the other whenever one of them goes wrong. Still, the impression that activists influence the court’s judgment has to be removed.

The National Judicial Appointments Commission is expected to replace the collegium system of appointing judges, giving a greater say to the executive in the process. Yet there was a time when the executive had its say. However, it was found that the government’s interference in appointments and transfers of judges was politically motivated, and, hence, the matter was left to the judges themselves. But both the collegiums and the executive have failed to ensure impartiality in appointments. So the Law Commission should seriously consider how to insulate the judiciary against any

influence and constitute some mechanism to take into consideration what the executive says.

This way the sensitivity of both the judiciary and the executive, which represents the people, will be taken care of. For example, the Right To Information Act has proven to be useful to know the reason behind a particular decision. This has helped to bring transparency to the official decisions. It has deepened democracy. The government may feel embarrassed over the disclosure of the truth, but there can be no compromise on the demands of an open society. To that extent, the Prime Minister's statement comes in the way of scrutiny. This cannot be the purpose of his warning against the activists. He should realise that they are doing their job. Many scams would not have seen the light of day if they had not questioned official decisions.

The Modi government has to ensure the executive does not in any way interfere in the working of the judiciary. At the same time, the judiciary has to be sensitive enough to the executive's right to frame policies from time to time. Ultimately, both have to adhere to the limits of boundary delineated by the constitution.

HINDU, APR 8, 2015

Conflict between two rights

SANJAY HEGDE

Two contrasting, but equally valid, viewpoints were expressed recently by Chief Justice H.L. Dattu and Justice Kurian Joseph of the Supreme Court of India

convenient: "Scheduling conferences during long weekends is administratively the right way forward." Picture shows Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Chief Justice of India H.L. Dattu during the joint conference of the Chief Ministers and the Chief Justices of High Courts in New Delhi.

The great 18th century Chief Justice of Britain, Lord Mansfield, was a workaholic. Once, while hearing a case, he proposed to continue the hearing on the following Friday. When reminded by Sergeant Davy, the counsel, that the date would fall on Good Friday, he said, "Never mind — the better day, the better deed." The sergeant said, "Your lordship will do as you please, but if you do sit on that day, I believe you will be the first judge who did business on a Good Friday since Pontius Pilate".

This exchange of over two centuries ago encapsulates the two contrasting, but equally valid, viewpoints that were expressed recently by Chief Justice H.L. Dattu and Justice Kurian Joseph of the Supreme Court of India. The question debated was whether it was right to convene a judicial conference of all Chief Justices and Chief Ministers during the

long weekend from Good Friday to Easter Sunday. As the German philosopher Friedrich Hegel noted, “Genuine tragedies in the world are not conflicts between right and wrong. They are conflicts between two rights.”

On March 18, Justice Joseph wrote to the Chief Justice, “I may with deep anguish bring to your kind notice that such an important conference shouldn’t have been held when some of us, who are otherwise expected to be part of the event, are otherwise committed on account of the holy days when we have religious ceremonies and family get-together as well.” He added that such “serious programmes” were not held during Diwali, Eid and other festivals. “Please don’t think that I am striking a communal note. Only since I see institutions like ours, which are otherwise bound to protect the secular ethos and project [a] secular image as per the mandate of the Constitution, slowly drifting away from constitutional obligations, I thought of putting this concern in writing,” he wrote.

The Chief Justice responded on March 20 saying he was shocked that the decision to hold the conference after a gap of two years “has been questioned on the ground of inappropriate time, i.e. during ‘holy and national holidays’”.

While he respected Justice Joseph’s commitment to holy days and religious ceremonies, the Chief Justice wrote that for him, “more important than anything else” was the agenda to be discussed at the conference — ranging from judicial reforms to computerisation of courts and reduction of backlog. He said the conference had been called in the first week of April because “the CJI and his two senior most colleagues and Chief Justices of High Courts will be free from regular court work and be able to contribute to the cause of judiciary”. The CJI said, “the question that I have to ask myself — perhaps I can’t ask you — is whether it is institutional interest or individual interest that one should give preference to. As far as I am concerned, I would give priority to [the] former and not to the latter.”

When advocate Lily Thomas mentioned the controversy in open court, the Chief Justice pointed out that the Chief Justices’ conference was held on Valmiki Day in 2007 and on Independence Day in 2009. “In 2007 and 2009, nobody had any grievance. What happened to spirituality back then? If you want to oppose it, please file a petition and let the court take a decision,” he said.

When the Prime Minister invited all the judges and Chief Ministers expected to attend the conference to dinner, Justice Kurian declined the invitation, but again buttressed his argument. He wrote on April 1 to the Prime Minister, “Your good self would appreciate that no important programmes are held during [the] sacred days of Diwali, Eid, Christmas etc ... I know it is too late to reschedule the events. I request Your Honour to kindly have in mind these concerns also while scheduling events and benevolently show equal importance and respect to the sacred days of all religions which are also declared as national holidays.”

Future course

The conference was held in the absence of both Justice Kurian and the Chief Minister of Kerala. The question now is of the correct course to be adopted in future. Scheduling conferences and retreats during long weekends is administratively the right way forward. Administrative conferences of judges must be held on holidays so that judicial work does not suffer. There will be long weekend holidays around Good Friday every year. Should important government functions be held at all on such days? How far must a secular state go to ensure that no holiday of a religious nature is interrupted by work? On a declared holiday, if a government functionary perceives his duty to the government as being at odds with his religious observance, where should his wisdom lead him?

A constitutionalist may usefully recall B.R. Ambedkar who said, "I tell you, religion is for man and not man for religion." As one schooled in a Catholic institution, I cannot help recalling instances in the Bible where religious observance in some circumstances specifically gave way to the greater general good.

For example, Jews were prohibited from working on Saturdays, the day of the Sabbath. But despite the rule, Christ worked to heal the sick and do good deeds on Sabbath days. When on a day of Sabbath, his hungry disciples plucked some grain to eat, they were charged by a strict sect called the Pharisees of not fully complying with the Sabbath. Christ said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Therefore, the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath." (Mark:2:27-28). In another instance he said, "It is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." (Matthew:12:12). He also asked the naysayers, "Which of you, having a donkey or an ox that has fallen into a pit, will not immediately pull him out on the Sabbath day?" (Luke 14:1:5) Thus, Christ preferred duty to a mere passive adherence to ritual piety.

The Bible has words of succour for the other point of view as well. It cannot be easily assumed that the response to a perceived religious slight will be a simple turning of the other cheek. The Book enjoins us to love our neighbours as we love ourselves. It was in this wisdom that the Indian model of secularism 'Sarva Dharma Samabhava', or equal respect for all religions, was conceived. There are holidays for all religious days so that no religion feels excluded. India is perhaps the only country where Jews, Muslims and Parsis live in amity with Hindus, Jains, Sikhs and Buddhists. On a holy day, while people pray, their friends outside the faith feel the benediction in equal measure. We cannot in good conscience ask of a neighbour to sacrifice a holiday on a Good Friday or Eid, if a holiday on Diwali or Holi remains sacrosanct.

A majoritarian acceptance of the greater common good at the cost of slighting a minority is not to be approved. Any impression that some religious holidays are too sacred to command work, while others are not must be strictly eschewed. No one must be made to feel that he or she worships a lesser God for whom the state cannot wait. In a secular

state, India's citizens must not be asked to make a choice. If they feel compelled to make one, the idea of India must be large enough to accommodate even an unpopular choice.

(Sanjay Hegde is a Supreme Court advocate.)

Any impression that some religious holidays are too sacred to command work, while others are not must be strictly eschewed

INDIAN EXPRESS, APR 8, 2015

Justice, bottom up

I don't know if/ when she was allowed to leave the jail. There are thousands, if not lakhs, of such persons in our prisons, permanently blighted.

Satyananda Mishra

At the recently concluded chief justices' conference, the viability of setting up a judicial service commission for the recruitment of lower court judges was on the agenda. Reportedly, a panel of apex court judges is to look into the matter. The manner of the selection of lower judges urgently needs to be reformed and reoriented. I remember my first visit to Jabalpur Central Jail in 1983-84, when I was district magistrate there. In the section housing women undertrials, I met an unmarried 16-year-old girl who was alleged to have killed her newborn baby. She had already been in prison for more than two years. I left Jabalpur later that year. I don't know if/ when she was allowed to leave the jail. There are thousands, if not lakhs, of such persons in our prisons, permanently blighted.

The unconscionable delays by the courts in deciding cases have come to be accepted as natural. Though we lament the delays every now and then, especially when sensational and dramatic cases come up. The public discourse on the functioning of the courts is muted and less strident than on the functioning of the government. This could be because only a small percentage of the population is directly affected by the courts. But it is also because we do not perceive the courts as instruments of service delivery, like we see the government. When the legal system and what is ailing it is discussed, the diagnosis of the problem and prescription for the cure are traced to the doors of the government.

But many of the ills afflicting the judicial system are inherent to it. Just like in the government, incompetent manpower and inefficient systems are responsible for both judicial delays and the poor quality of decision-making. Instead of confronting these core issues, the blame is focused on the lack of adequate numbers of courts and judges, making a qualitative problem a quantitative one.

Consider the manner of the recruitment of judges and magistrates who man the subordinate courts, the initial tiers of civil dispute resolution and adjudication of criminal cases. These judges are recruited through competitive examinations conducted by the state public service commissions. The inefficiency and lack of objectivity of these commissions are common knowledge — instances of corruption, nepotism and influence-peddling have frequently marred recruitment conducted by the commissions. Most law graduates who take these examinations come from colleges where there is no insistence on classroom attendance. Original law texts are rarely used and students depend on “key books” written by unknown authors to pass. Rarely do students from the leading law schools sit the entrance examinations.

Further, there is no arrangement for rigorous training to hone and improve the inadequate skills of the recruits before they start hearing and deciding cases. A majority of cases are decided in courts presided over by these judges. One can imagine why there are so many delays. It is in this area that reform is critically and urgently needed. As a first step, why not set up high-quality institutions in every state to train fresh recruits before they start hearing cases? But since it is the law colleges that provide the candidates for selection, it is also critical to ensure that there is a minimum acceptable level of education imparted there. The entire legal system is run between lawyers and judges. No amount of judicial reform is likely to yield results unless legal education is also cleaned up.

The idea of an Indian judicial service on the lines of all-India services like the IAS or IPS has been considered in the past and abandoned. It is worth considering again. For one, recruitment by the Union Public Service Commission would ensure utmost objectivity and transparency in selection. It would attract much better law students from across the country, at once improving the quality of judges. After two years of intensive training at the National Judicial Academy, which already exists, the recruits could be assigned state cadres and posted across the country. If we want to create a robust judicial system at the subordinate level and a rich pool to draw from for the appointment of high court and, later, Supreme Court judges, the constitution of an Indian judicial service is a sound idea.

Finally, there is an urgent need for the judiciary to revisit the manner in which cases are heard and decided. We need a ceiling on the time each party can be given to adduce its evidence, documentary or human. There should also be a limit on the number of adjournments each side can seek. We could even consider disallowing certain types of disputes from admission all together. For instance, all disputes below a certain pecuniary value need not be adjudicated by courts at all and could be left to other social devices and institutions. The solution to judicial delay is systemic reform. There will be strong resistance from vested interests. After all, delays benefit many actors. They will keep blaming the executive and ask for more courts, more judges.

LEGISLATIVE BODIES

STATESMAN, APR 8, 2015

Serving themselves before others

Tyagaraj Sharma

The huge hike in pay and perks that Karnataka MLAs have granted themselves has not come as a surprise. This is something law makers in the states or in Parliament have done repeatedly in the past while cocking a snook at the common man.

In the early 1950s and '60s, a member of Parliament or legislator entered politics or contested elections with the avowed objective of serving the public. By and large, the position was not treated as a privilege by them but one of pure service and commitment; nor did they seek higher pensions, salaries and perks that included free air and train travel for oneself and kin.

In addition, their personal records were above reproach, something that cannot be said about many of today's worthies, if the scores of reports and studies by the Association of Democratic Reforms, an independent agency, are anything to go by.

Nor, for that matter, could they ever be seen dozing in the House during important debates or caught watching porn as a section of BJP ministers was seen doing during the party's rule in Karnataka.

And, for all such "services" that they render in the state, the lawmakers have given themselves a hefty hike in salary and perks a few days ago, costing the exchequer over Rs.42 crore annually. To think that in his recent budget, chief minister Siddaramiah was lamenting the cuts in Central finances that would impact "developmental works" in the state!

Here one cannot but help quote from *Walking with Giants*, the recent memoirs of the late G Ramachandran, former Union finance secretary, if only to draw a comparison with politicians of yore. An upright civil servant, he worked with Rajaji, Kamaraj, Bakthvatsalam and Annadurai before being handpicked for the post of secretary, economic affairs, by Indira Gandhi. He rose to become finance secretary during Charan Singh's time.

This is what he had to say about Singh's character. According to him, the deputy Prime Minister, who was also holding the finance portfolio in the late '70s, came into his room

and jokingly asked for two days “chutti” as he had to visit Lucknow on personal work. In a lighter vein, the bureaucrat said that nobody could go on leave during the ensuing budget season.

Jokes apart, Ramachandran writes that he had to tell his boss that for visiting Lucknow he would not need two days. As Deputy Prime Minister, he was entitled to use the Union defence ministry’s aircraft. “Charan Singh then revealed that it (the visit) was for a wedding and that is why he had to go with his entire family. He could not afford a commercial aircraft for all of them. That is why he was travelling by air-conditioned second class. No more telling instance of Singh’s impeccable integrity needs to be cited,” said the author. Indeed those days, politicians were a breed apart.

In fact, even in the late 1980s, we have had cases, albeit isolated, of MPs whose dedication to the cause and integrity marked them out as different. It is another matter that by then the majority of the law makers had learnt to join hands to seek hikes in their pay and perks. They would disagree on every subject, storm into the well of Parliament on different issues, highlighting their political differences. But the minute it came to an increase in their own benefits, they showed a complete unanimity.

Witness, therefore, the manner in which in 1989-1990 during VP Singh’s tenure as Prime Minister, LK Advani of the BJP sought to move a resolution seeking a hike in the salaries of Parliamentarians. This appeared to be a sudden move, taking those of us in the press gallery as well by surprise.

Predictably, there was near unanimity among the members on this issue of “national importance”. The party for the parliamentarians, however, was spoilt by AK Roy, an Independent from Burdwan. Amid the loud support that Advani’s proposal received, his was the lone voice of dissent.

He sought to shout out the supporters, arguing that what the members were proposing was wrong, unfair and not proper. “This is not what we came to Parliament for,” he reiterated, adding that he would not support the move at any cost. The lone protest was drowned as he was clearly outnumbered.

Sensing that an embarrassing situation was about to develop, Advani promptly suggested that the matter be taken up for discussion later. But no sooner did the House assemble post-lunch, he raised his point again. Within minutes the proposal was approved unanimously, amid thumping of tables and loud cheers.

Roy, who was a few minutes late in coming to the House, rushed in to protest. But by that time, the MPs had realised their objective. The MP from Burdwan, the lone dissenter, had no choice but to stage a walk-out in protest though it mattered little to others.

The then Prime Minister's reaction to the hike was, surprisingly, no different from that displayed by Karnataka chief minister Siddaramiah. When asked for his comment after the Karnataka Legislature Salaries, Pensions and Allowances (Amendment) Bill 2015, and the Karnataka Ministers' Salaries and Allowances (Amendment) Bill 2015, which were passed by a voice vote, he had just one cryptic comment to make, that "the House has voted for them unanimously".

For the record, following the passage of the two bills, the overall hike in the pay and perks of a cabinet minister in the state would now be over Rs 78,000 per month while an MLA would take home an additional Rs 50,000.

This apart, the sumptuary allowance, house rent and maintenance, too, have gone up substantially. For example, a cabinet minister in Karnataka will get Rs 3 lakh per annum against Rs 1.5 lakh at present. Likewise, a minister's benefit in this regard would go up from Rs 80,000 to Rs 2 lakh. Above all, the legislators also voted for a huge increase in their allowances covering constituency travel, telephone, domestic and travel outside the state.

Surprisingly, there is one MLA, that, too, from the Congress, who is not excited by these increases. Basavaraja Rayareddy was quoted as saying that "I will not accept the revised salaries as the hike is not called for". An exception indeed! This increase will, predictably, lead to lawmakers from other states following suit. As a matter of fact, speculation is already rife that parliamentarians are now pushing for a steep hike in their pensions, salaries and perks. The last time they nearly succeeded in getting themselves equated with secretaries and cabinet secretaries in terms of the basic salaries that these high level bureaucrats draw.

The MPs' argument was that their own basic was lower than the bureaucrats who worked under them. So their basic should be at least a rupee higher than the Rs.80,000 per month that a secretary of a ministry took home, to go by news reports.

Mulayam Singh and Lalu Yadav, however, did not appear to be satisfied with the increases and salaries they were getting as MPs. Demanding a whopping increase of 500

per cent, they even threatened to stall proceedings in Parliament during the debate in 2010 over the issue.

They were pacified, at least at that time, with the argument that the bureaucrats depended only on their salaries. In comparison, most parliamentarians were known to run businesses to earn a decent income.

Besides, a bureaucrat got his pension after serving over 35 years. In comparison, an MP was entitled to pension without having to serve that long. In addition, the refrain was that the babus did not get DA for attending office.

The two Yadavs appeared to have been pacified then, though it is doubtful whether they, along with other MPs, will remain quite so for long when it comes to seeking higher benefits for the lawmakers this time.

It is here that one cannot help quoting from Ramachandran's memoirs again, if only to highlight the mettle and character of our politicians in the early '50s and '60s, inevitably forcing us to draw comparisons.

Ramachandran says that "when a severe earthquake hit Assam, ministers decided to contribute Rs.100 each. I was asked to collect the cheques and send them to the Personal Secretary to the CM, Assam. By the next day, I got cheques from all the ministers (in Tamil Nadu) except one.

"The cheque from Kutti Krishnan Nair had not arrived. On enquiry, I was surprised to learn that the minister had no balance left in his bank account at the end of the month. On his salary cheque being credited the next day, the minister promptly sent his contribution.

"A minister without Rs.100 in his bank account at the end of the month, was evidence enough of the incredible integrity of our politicians of those days. Will those halcyon days ever return?"

-- The writer is The Stateman's special representative in Bengaluru

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ECONOMIC TIMES, APR 8, 2015

Delhi government releases funds to MCDs for staff salaries

[Delhi government](#) today said it has released Rs 226.66 crore as the first instalment to the North and East Municipal Corporations to ensure payment of unpaid salaries to their staff.

According to the government, of the total amount released, Rs 138.28 crore has been given to north corporation for salary purpose while for other non-plan heads Rs 11.82 crore has been released.

"East municipal corporation was given Rs 51.96 crore for salary purpose and for other non-plan heads Rs 36.42 crore was given," said a [senior government official](#).

[Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal](#) had on April 1, the first day of the new financial year, directed the department of [finance](#) to immediately release funds so that the civic bodies' sanitation workers could be given their unpaid salaries.

Delhi government has made it clear that employees of the corporations should not suffer due to the "rampant corruption" and "gross mismanagement" in the three corporations.

"Delhi government has also appealed to the central government to rise above party considerations and immediately release the funds it owes to the state so that financial health of badly managed corporations could be improved," the official also said.

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

DECAN HERALD, APR 8, 2015

Is it maximum governance?

Faizan Mustafa

However we may clothe it, however it may be necessary, however much it may be justified, it is negation of the rule of law”, said K T Shah in the Constituent Assembly on ordinance making powers. The Narendra Modi government has the dubious distinction of first starting its innings with an ordinance to get a man of PM’s choice in the PMO and then promulgating an ordinance every 28th day.

Modi has equalled former PM Indira Gandhi’s record and this is not a great sign. It has now repromulgated the controversial land ordinance. The Supreme Court has held repromulgation of ordinances as colourable exercise of power and thus unconstitutional. It may be permitted in rarest of the rare situation if there is ‘necessity of immediate action’ which implies new and sudden development. Repromulgation of the land ordinance cannot be justified as there is no new or sudden development. Similar constitutional wrong was committed by the then Vajpayee government which, having consciously decided not to introduce bill replacing POTA ordinance, repromulgated it.

Constitutions do not confer power. Their job is to restrict and limit exercise of governmental power. Thus the rhetoric of powerful Modi and Finance Minister Arun Jaitley’s assertion in parliament that there is nothing wrong in promulgating ordinances go against the ideals of constitutionalism. Ordinance making power is essentially a power to be used to meet only extraordinary situations and it cannot be used in a routine manner or to serve just political ends.

Even members of the constituent assembly were apprehensive and wary of including ordinance making power in the constitution. Both H N Kunzru and K T Shah called for restricting the executive’s power to promulgate ordinances through greater oversight by legislatures. Ambedkar overruled them on the ground of necessity of ‘immediate action.’ Neither the United States nor the United Kingdom nor Canada confer ordinance making power on the executive. The US and Canada do provide for calling a special session of

legislature to meet exigencies of emergency. We have continued the legacy of British raj. Ordinance provision has been bodily lifted from Section 42 of Government of India Act, 1935. President Pranab Mukherjee rightly said recently that routine legislation should not be done through invocation of ordinance making powers.

But then between 1952 and 2015, as many as 670 ordinances were promulgated by the successive governments though with the sole exception of the demonetisation of Rs 1000, Rs 5000 and Rs 10,000 notes in 1978 every other ordinance could have waited for the next session of parliament.

As many as 261 ordinances were promulgated within 15 days of end of session and 214 just before 15 days of start of parliamentary session. Bank nationalisation ordinance was issued on July, 19, 1969 just a day before the parliamentary session. As many as 34 ordinances were promulgated in 1994 which is the highest number in a year. Similarly, the record of governors in promulgating ordinances is far more depressing. The exact number of ordinances so far signed by the governors in various states is not known. No other constitutional democracy can match Bihar's record of promulgating 50 ordinances in a day.

Ordinances have been promulgated for all kinds of routine things which did not require any immediate action: to increase salaries of legislators, ministers and judges, to deal with out of turn house allotments of government employees, to set up panels such as National Human Rights Commission etc and tribunals such as National Tax Tribunal, to start Delhi Metro, to establish 15 central universities and to create and abolish posts of part time village officers etc.

One vital reason of ordinance taking place of ordinary legislative process is that the number of days on which parliament works has over the decades gone down. In the last five years, parliament has met only for 71 days per annum. State Assemblies have done even worse; Delhi Assembly met for 21 days, Haryana 13 days and Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh for 32 and 30 days, respectively.

Dubious records

There is no requirement of minimum sittings per annum except that the gap between two sittings should not be of more than two months. On the contrary, British Parliament meets for a minimum of 140 days in a year. We should make an amendment in our constitution and fix minimum number of days on which parliament would meet in a year. At least 120 days may be considered ideal.

Similarly, most Bills in India are passed without any discussion. We recently noticed that Information Technology Act was passed in few minutes and the court had to strike down its Section 66(A). Haryana in 2011-13 under Congress government got 121 Bills passed without any discussion. Some 6 per cent Bills were passed with less than five minutes' discussion and only 5 per cent Bills were discussed and debated for more than 20 minutes. Bihar was slightly better as it on average took 29 minutes in passing a Bill.

The other issue is that in parliamentary democracy, parliament should be supreme and executive should be subservient and responsible to it. But we observe in India we have developed hegemony of the executive. This is nothing short of making mockery of parliamentary democracy. The government completely controls the legislative agenda. Only government sponsored Bills are passed and private member Bill or opposition sponsored Bills are rarely enacted.

In fact, no private member's Bill has been passed since 1970. By the 35th constitutional amendment, the executive even inserted a new clause making ordinance making power beyond judicial review. Subsequently, the Janata Party government deleted this provision which was clearly in violation of basic structure. All this is undercutting constitutionalism and damaging our reputation as constitutional state.

TELEGRAPH, APR 8, 2015
CAG report swipe at good governance

The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) report for the 2013-14 financial year brings out holes in the claims of good governance made by chief minister Nitish Kumar by raising objections to the manner several departments and projects were being run in the state.

Finance minister Bijendra Prasad Yadav tabled the reports in the Assembly today. Incidentally, Nitish snapped ties with the BJP in 2013 and threw the BJP ministers out of his ministry. So far, the BJP has remained silent on the CAG reports because it included the period in which they shared power with Nitish. But this is the first CAG report, which has audited a period in which Nitish was running the government without BJP for most of the term.

The CAG report has also pulled up the government in financial management. It has pointed out that funds to the tune of Rs 58,020 crore remained non-reconciled in books and over Rs 689 crore was withdrawn from the contingency funds to meet expenditure of unforeseen nature. The defalcations to the tune of Rs 11.28 crore have been raised in the audit. The state has been pulled up for delay in furnishing of utility certificate, especially by education and panchayati raj departments.

On the functioning of Bihar State Pollution Control Board, the GAG report stated that it did not carry out any survey to identify polluting industries and it also failed to access the requirements of sewage treatment plants.

Similarly, on the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls-SABLA, a centrally sponsored scheme, the CAG report points out that the data on adolescent girls in the state was not reliable and due to inability of the state government to provide utilisation certificate, the central assistance of Rs 173 crore had to forgo.

About the functioning of directorate of archaeology and museum, the CAG has observed that it has not laid out a policy on guidelines for selection of sites for excavation and it did not conduct a survey on unprotected sites and monuments. The CAG report also points out that the government failed to cover all villages under the Total Sanitation Campaign and Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan.

It also raises questions on maintenance of state highways by the government and states that agencies could not complete work of those despite adequate and timely funds. "These projects were delayed for over two years due to non-acquisition of land and non-shifting of utilities," it says. It questions the government on e-governance pointing out

that the Crime and Criminal Tracking Network Systems, aimed at creating a nationwide network of tracking criminals, could not be launched in the state due to delay in creation of the infrastructure.

It has harshly criticised the Patna Municipal Corporation and maintained that it had not maintained records on two key areas - solid waste management and approving building plan.

"The PMC did not have adequate solid waste management as house-to-house collection, segregation and recycling of waste is not being done," it stresses.

TERRORISM

HINDU, APR 15, 2015

A savage new world of terrorism

M.K. NARAYANAN

M.K. Narayanan

The Islamist terror network has grown into a hydra-headed phenomenon. This has consequences far beyond the current arc of terrorist violence, which for the moment is confined to the regions of Asia and North Africa. But countries like India are already feeling the heat. Hence, counterterrorism agencies should not be lulled into complacency by assertions that India and Indian Muslims are insulated from, and therefore unlikely to be affected by, the new virus.

Like other viruses, this one too has several variants. The core theology remains the Saudi theologian, Abdul Wahab's doctrinaire teachings, combined with the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood icon, Syed Qutub's nihilistic fanaticism. Previously, a liberal dose of Salafism had contributed to the lethal violence that characterised 20th century terrorism. Now, it is the advent of a new radical Islamist breed that is committed to the supremacy of faith, and a belief in exclusionist Islamic puritanism, that is likely to result in 21st century terrorism being remembered for the savagery it practices.

Newer and older outfits

The current levels of violence should not be regarded as a transient phenomenon. It might be recalled that in late 2013, American embassies in West Asia had to close down due to a realistic terror threat from the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). Russia had to face terror attacks in quick succession in the run-up to the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi. Ever since the "Caucasian Caliphate" came into existence some years ago, Russia has witnessed multiple attacks including 50 suicide attacks. Today, there are increasing numbers of ethnic *jihadi* outfits, – consisting mainly of recent converts to Islam, who are in a position to supply "more and more fighters" for the cause.

The situation is getting more complicated by the day. Even as newer outfits such as the Islamic State (IS) and the Jabhat-al-Nusra in Syria/Iraq are gaining ground by adopting more violent methods and techniques, older outfits are reinventing themselves and becoming more sanguinary; 18th century ideologies not only drive the IS/al-Nusra, but also the different affiliates of the al-Qaeda such as the Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP), the Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab. For example, in terms of lethality, the AQAP has eclipsed the original al-Qaeda. Atrocities committed by the IS are described by the United Nations as "beyond inhumane". Earlier distinctions between "infidels" and "believers" (including those

belonging to other Abrahamic religions are becoming blurred. Nearer home, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) in Pakistan is reportedly preparing for another devastating attack on Indian targets. In Afghanistan, the Haqqani network continues to plan attacks on Indian missions.

Mindless violence

The recent series of barbaric attacks, from Pakistan to Australia to Europe to North Africa, confirm that “mindless” violence remains the staple of most groups. In November 2014, a suicide bomber belonging to the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) killed 60 Pakistanis on the Wagah border. In December, TTP was behind the killing of over 140 people which included 132 children at an army school in Peshawar. Three persons were killed in a terrorist attack in Sydney in mid-December 2014. And in January 2015, a group of terrorists in Paris massacred 12 people at the office of the French satirical magazine, *Charlie Hebdo* ; in this case, each of the targets was identified by name.

Africa too has not been spared and is witnessing a resurgence in *jihadi* -linked violence. In September 2013, the Somali-based Al-Shabaab claimed responsibility for the killing of 67 people in a shopping mall in Nairobi. In January this year, the Boko Haram carried out the “deadliest massacre” in its history, reportedly killing over 2,000 people in attacks on Baga and surrounding towns, in Nigeria. In April, in Kenya, al-Shabaab gunmen killed 147 students (mainly Christians) following a siege at the Garisa University College campus.

Yemen has become a major staging post for many al-Qaeda programmed actions. The intense Shia-Sunni conflict in Yemen provides many opportunities for unbridled savagery. For example, on March 21, in Sana'a, four suicide bombers blew themselves up during Friday prayers at two Shia mosques, killing at least 137 people and injuring 350 others. Southern Yemen has emerged as a key centre for the AQAP, from where it has planned several attacks on Western targets, and is said to be planning several more. Yemen today is an embodiment of a “failed State”, which provides facilities for terrorist outfits of different persuasions to engage in terrorist violence.

Dramatic shift

However, it is the emergence of the IS that has brought about a dramatic shift in the topology of terrorism. Terrorism now possesses a virtual state of its own. It holds wide swathes of territory. It is flush with funds, and is fed by an ever increasing number of battle-hungry fighters. Educated Sunni Muslims from across the world are responding to the call of the IS, inspired by their leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi’s vision of an Islamic State based on ancient Islamic history. The central themes are “hijra” (migration) and “bay’ah” (allegiance). A heady mix of regional warfare and Islamist fundamentalism and

the call to establish new “ties of brotherhood”, are proving irresistible for the “Muslim faithful”. This is all a prelude to the final battle that will come later.

The IS is exploiting the tragic circumstances of Syria and Iraq to enlarge the area of its Caliphate. It already claims Yemen’s Sana’a province as a part of its Sunni Caliphate. The Islamic State of Khorasan includes Afghanistan, Pakistan and parts of North-west India including Gujarat. Jordan, Kuwait and Lebanon are all to be included in an enlarged Islamic Caliphate. As its coffers grow — estimated to be well over \$5 billion as of now — the IS is apparently seeking higher stakes.

Grooming and recruitment

Coordination and affinities between *jihadi* movements across Asia and North Africa are also growing. For example, the IS is seeking allegiance from like-minded terror outfits across the region. The Boko Haram has already pledged its allegiance. The IS is now advising Boko Haram on how to achieve territorial gains and metamorphose from a guerrilla movement into a force capable of holding on to its gains.

In the battle for the *jihadi* mind-space, the IS clearly has gained the upper hand at the moment. Using social media and other Internet-linked methodologies, it has been able to lure recruits in sizeable numbers from across the world. It has sought to portray itself as a “way of life” and has glamourised its movement as one seeking spiritual purity. Thousands of educated Muslims, including women, have thus been inveigled into joining the IS. Counterterrorism agencies — especially in the West — have been unable to stem the tide of individuals volunteering to join the IS-led war for Islamic liberation. Reliable Western estimates suggest that almost 27 per cent of all Muslims in the West are inclined towards the IS; 40 per cent of all foreign fighters in Syria/Iraq are from the West.

Grooming women for *jihad* has become one of the more successful ventures undertaken by the IS. Plots referred to as “Trojan Horse” have also been unearthed in the West, which are aimed at altering the character of teaching in schools and making them fall in line with the Islamic faith. This is helping to swell the ranks of pro-IS “stay-at-home radicals”. The intention appears to be to employ the latter for “lone wolf” attacks in major urban cities, far removed from the scene of today’s fighting in North Africa and West Asia. Hence, this could lead to many more incidents across the globe on the pattern of the beheading of the British soldier, Lee James Rigby, in 2013, and the shooting of the Canadian Corporal, Nathan Cirillo, in 2014.

India cannot expect that it will remain insulated from the current mania that is afflicting even countries with a much smaller population of educated Muslims. Instances have already come to light of the radicalisation of Indian Muslims, and their numbers are growing. Known cases, such as those of Mehdi Biswas, arrested after a Twitter handle supporting the IS was traced to him; Arif Majeed, who is said to have had a stint with IS;

and Salman Moinuddin, who was arrested at Hyderabad airport, are only the tip of the iceberg. These examples are symptomatic of a growing global phenomenon where the digital footprints of IS proselytisers are subverting the thoughts and the beliefs of educated Muslim youth. It would be a mistake to believe that with the Indian Mujahidin having been routed, the situation in India remains normal. The radical Islamist movement in India must be seen as an integral part of the global phenomenon of a new 'über-Wahhabi' model of Islam. At one level, this employs outfits such as the IS to wean away educated Muslim youth to the Islamic cause. At the other, it has helped to create new affiliates leading to new terrorist franchises, several of which are splinter groups from the erstwhile al-Qaeda network.

(M.K. Narayanan is a former National Security Advisor and former Governor of West Bengal.)

Terrorism now possesses a virtual state of its own — the Islamic State. The IS is flush with funds, and is fed by an ever increasing number of battle-hungry and educated Sunni Muslims from across the world...

Counterterrorism agencies should not be lulled into complacency by assertions that India is insulated from, and therefore unlikely to be affected by, the growing virus of radical terrorism

TRANSPORT

ASIAN AGE, APR 8, 2015

NGT bans diesel vehicles older than 10 years in Delhi

In a significant step to improve ambient air quality, the National Green Tribunal on Tuesday held that all diesel vehicles which are more than 10 years old will not be permitted to ply in Delhi.

Noting that diesel is prime source of air pollution in Delhi, the tribunal said the situation is so alarming that people have been even advised to leave Delhi due to adverse effects on health.

“A number of countries like Brazil, China, Denmark etc. have prohibited diesel vehicles or are in the process of doing away with them and imposing stringent taxes on the vehicles. We have already noticed that certain stringent measures need to be taken to ensure that residents of Delhi do not travel closer to ill-health with each breath they take. Thus, we direct all diesel vehicles, heavy or light, which are 10 years old will not be permitted on the roads of Delhi and NCR,” a bench headed by the NGT chairperson, Justice Swatanter Kumar, said.

The tribunal directed the transport department of the Delhi government and other concerned authorities to prepare a comprehensive data of registration of all such vehicles which are 10 or more years old.

It criticised the authorities for not complying to its orders of November 26, 28 and December 4 last year to improve the air quality standards of the capital.

“All authorities and the state have utterly failed to comply to the directions of the tribunal. Authorities have not even initiated action for compliance. Due to the increasing pollutants of air, the life of residents of NCR Delhi is becoming more vulnerable to various diseases and the greatest sufferers are young children,” it said.

“It has been pointed out that diesel is the prime source of bringing air pollution in Delhi. Diesel fumes cause damage to the lungs, brain and can cause even cancer. The situation is so alarming that medically people have been even advised to leave Delhi,” the tribunal said.

The tribunal’s direction came while hearing a petition of Vardhaman Kaushik who had contended that “the level of particulates in Delhi is rising manifold.”

During the proceedings, Mr Kaushik argued that the state authorities have not shown any effort to implement the orders of the tribunal.

“I have not seen any change happening. Plastic and other agricultural waste is being burnt in the open. The orders of the tribunal are being violated,” he said, adding that Western countries were banning private diesel vehicles.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HINDU, APR 8, 2015

Kejriwal reaches out to the private sector to make Delhi a modern city

The Aam Aadmi Party government might have opposed the idea of FDI in retail in the city during its previous avatar, but on Tuesday Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal urged the industry leaders to come up with ideas on various issues plaguing the city.

He asked them to help his government in making Delhi a modern and clean city for everyone—the poor, rich and the middle class.

Stressing that the role of the private sector in various fields, especially in job creation was inevitable, Mr. Kejriwal said: “We have got five years. We cannot do it alone. There is a motive behind coming here (at the CII function). I want to create a new type of Delhi not only for the rich but also for the poor and the middle class. I want to invite you to join us.”

Mr. Kejriwal was speaking at a Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) event attended by some big industrial leaders including Azim Premji and Rahul Bajaj. In order to woo the industry,

Mr. Kejriwal assured the packed audience to make Delhi among the top five least corrupt cities along with ease of doing business. He asked for suggestions and ideas, besides investment plans, on water recycling, cleaning of Yamuna, check pollution, solid waste management, cleanliness, improvement of roads, transport, construction of schools and hospitals.

Urging the business leaders to sanction their funds under the corporate social responsibility in developing some key infrastructure, Mr. Kejriwal assured the audience that the zero-tolerance policy of his government would ensure that their money would be utilised as desired.

Mr. Kejriwal cited his government’s decision of simplifying laws that would help in establishing single-window clearance for new business proposals including knowledge-based industry, which are also non-polluting. Citing his party’s poll promise of free wi-fi project, Mr. Kejriwal said that it was a ‘small dream’ but it was an infinite business opportunity to be tapped by the industry.

At the CII function, the Chief Minister asked for suggestions and ideas, besides investment plans, on water recycling, cleaning of Yamuna, check pollution, solid waste management, cleanliness, improvement of roads, transport, construction of schools and hospitals