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CIVIL AVIATION

DECCAN HERALD, JAN 30, 2014

Private airlines told to give VIP treatment to MPs

Private airlines, including the no-frill ones, have been directed by the government to ensure that special privileges, like faster security clearances and lounge access, are given to MPs in line with what Air India has been providing so far.

While the protocol to accord such services to MPs have been in existence for over three years now, aviation regulator DGCA, in a fresh directive to all airlines, has pointed out that the airports and airlines were "not adhering to the guidelines on protocol norms and courtesy to be extended to Members of Parliament."

Noting that a 2007 circular of Civil Aviation Ministry providing the guidelines and instructions in this regard, had only listed Air India, DGCA chief Prabhat Kumar also advised the Ministry "to review the order on protocol norms and courtesy for the Members of Parliament and include the names of other airlines companies including LCC (low-cost carriers)".

The DGCA directive came after Parliament's 'Committee on Violation of Protocol Norms and Contemptuous Behaviour of government officers with member(s) of Lok Sabha', which is part of the Privileges Committee, had raised the issue with the Ministry late last year.

The committee had said that "airports and airlines are not adhering to the guidelines on protocol norms and courtesy to be extended to the members of Parliament." Barring Air India which has been extending such courtesies to the MPs so far, the other airlines which have been instructed are Jet Airways, IndiGo, SpiceJet and GoAir.

The protocol, which is "to be followed by all concerned, including private airports and airlines", includes reserved lounge facilities, complimentary tea, coffee or water, free access in the terminal building and designation of one officer of airport as Protocol Officer to extend all facilities and courtesies to MPs, according to reply to a Lok Sabha question in August last year.

CIVIL SERVICE

TIMES OF INDIA, JAN 31, 2014

2-year fixed postings for IAS, IPS and forest service

[Bharti Jain](#)

Every state will now have to make appointments of cadre officers on the recommendation of a Civil Services Board constituted by it under chairmanship of the chief secretary.

NEW DELHI: Exactly three months after the [Supreme Court](#) directed the Centre to insulate civil servants from political pressure by giving them a fixed tenure, the government has amended the rules governing IAS, [IPS](#) and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) officers to assure them at least two years in a given posting.

Every state will now have to make appointments of cadre officers on the recommendation of a [Civil Services Board](#) constituted by it under chairmanship of the chief secretary. Besides, what could spell relief for bureaucrats like Haryana cadre [IAS](#) officer [Ashok Khemka](#) and young IAS officer from Uttar Pradesh [Durga Sakthi Nagpal](#), the transfer of a cadre officer before the minimum specified tenure can be done only on the recommendation of the board.

The competent authority may reject the recommendation of the board, but the reasons thereof must be recorded.

According to the amendments effected to the IAS/IPS/IFoS cadre rules, a cadre officer appointed to any cadre post shall hold the office for at least two years unless in the meantime, he/she is promoted, retired or sent on deputation outside the state or training exceeding two months. The fixed tenure may be specified by the state government in the case of cadre officer appointed to non-cadre posts.

The board shall examine cases of premature transfers, consider for transfer before fixed tenure based on circumstances it thinks fit, and recommend to the competent authority names of officers for premature transfer with reasons to be recorded in writing.

The board can seek justification from the administrative department of the concerned state for premature transfers, obtain comments or views of the officer proposed to be transferred, and not recommend premature transfer unless satisfied with the reasons.

The board shall also submit a quarterly report to the Centre giving details of officers recommended to be transferred before the minimum tenure and the reasons thereof.

A look at the minutes of a meeting of state principal secretaries (personnel) convened by the Centre in September 2013 shows that no more than 13 states had notified IAS (cadre) rules for stability of tenure, while 11 states were yet to do so. The states of Bihar,

Maharashtra, Gujarat and West Bengal were disinclined to notify the rules, citing reasons like legal complications, existence of a similar law and already stable tenures.

Even as the Centre pushed the non-committal states for their consent, the Supreme Court on October 31, 2013, passed an order ruling a minimum assured tenure for civil servant, thus paving the way for an amendment of the rules. The ruling was a petition filed by 83 ex-bureaucrats.

Central Indian Civil and Administrative Association secretary Sanjay Bhoosreddy on Thursday welcomed the new cadre rules as a small step towards good governance. However, adding a note of caution, he said, "These guidelines are there since 2008, but the states have not been implementing them. Let us wait and see if the new rules are followed in letter and spirit."

The Civil Services Board for IAS officers would include chief secretary, senior-most additional chief secretary of chairman, Board or Revenue or Financial Commissioner, and principal secretary/secretary, personnel, in the state government. For IPS officers, it shall also consist of principal secretary (home) and the state DGP. For IFoS officers, the two additional members on the board would be principal secretary, forest, and principal chief conservator of forest.

TIMES OF INDIA, JAN 31, 2014

Odisha Administrative Service officers threaten stir over cadre rejig demand
Minati Singha,

BHUBANESWAR: [Odisha Administrative Service](#) (OAS) officers on Thursday threatened to go on a peaceful protest against the [state government](#) from February 1 for not fulfilling their demand of cadre restructuring.

From February 1 to 7, they would wear black badges to work and if their demands were still not fulfilled by then, they would go on mass leave from February 8.

"There has been stagnation in the careers of OAS officers due to lack of time-bound promotion. Delay in promotion has de-motivated officers and also prevented many from reaching pay band-4, thus incurring financial loss," said president of OAS association [Nirmal](#) Chandra Mishra.

"After our discussion with chief minister [Naveen Patnaik](#) failed, we were forced to go into agitation mode," he added.

There are a total 1,416 OAS posts in the state of which nearly 200 posts are lying vacant.

The officers alleged that in the present scenario, it takes about 20 years for an OAS officer to get his first promotion while posts in senior positions are too few to accommodate upward mobility.

"Many officers have opted for private opportunities due to lack of promotion opportunities even after 10-15 years of service in the cadre. OAS officers from very senior batches are still awaiting promotion," Mishra added.

ASIAN AGE, JAN 26, 2014

Politics & babus: Centre mulls cooling-off time

Close on the heels of the bitter war of words between former home secretary R.K. Singh and the UPA-II government, the Centre is planning to bar retired bureaucrats from joining political parties soon after retirement.

After rejecting a proposal of the Election Commission in this regard, the government is veering towards the view that a cooling-off period of two years may be necessary for retiring bureaucrats before they can formally join any political party to avoid "conflict of interest".

Mr Singh joined the BJP six months after he retired as home secretary in June 2013. Speaking to this newspaper, minister of state in the PMO V. Narayanasamy said the government is "open to the idea" of banning bureaucrats from joining a political party immediately after leaving service. The Department of Personnel and Training has sought the opinion of the attorney-general in the matter.

"We have asked the AG for an opinion. We are open to the idea and a final decision is yet to be taken," Mr Narayanasamy said.

The apparent U-turn in the government's stand comes at a time when Mr Singh has stirred a major controversy, accusing his former boss, Union home minister Sushilkumar Shinde, of interfering in postings and transfers in the Delhi police.

ASIAN AGE, JAN 30, 2014

AAP govt sits on surplus of IAS officers

The tension between the AAP-led Delhi government and the Union home ministry is set to escalate with the Kejriwal-led government sitting on a surplus of over two dozen IAS officers. Against the sanctioned 56 IAS officers for the capital, the Delhi government has 82 IAS officers in sharp contrast to the situation in UTs like Arunachal Pradesh and Andaman.

Top MHA officials said another "re-shuffle" may be on the cards in March, after six officers were recently transferred out of Delhi despite hue and cry made by the Kejriwal government.

“Some more officers are completing their tenures by March. We cannot have a situation where other UTs like Andaman and Arunachal Pradesh have a shortage of IAS officers and Delhi has a surplus,” a top official in the UT division of the MHA told this newspaper. Sources, meanwhile, indicated that the MHA is also in no mood to allow Mr Kejriwal’s “interference”.

Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal had recently asked the Prime Minister to intervene and direct the MHA to retain the six officers recently transferred out of Delhi till the general elections. He had claimed that these transfers happened without consulting the Delhi government.

“The norms cannot be dictated by a single state government. The routine transfers and postings of IAS officers are done by the MHA with the help of a joint cadre management board. The CM is mainly consulted for appointment of top officials like chief secretary and some others,” an official.

The AAP-MHA tussle comes in the backdrop of serious allegations levelled by Mr Kejriwal against home minister Sushilkumar Shinde during his recent dharna protest in the capital. Mr Kejriwal had backed BJP leader and former home secretary R.K. Singh’s remarks that Mr Shinde used to influence transfers and postings of the Delhi police.

Meanwhile, MHA officials said that the six officers transferred out of Delhi were part of 17 IAS officers of AGMU cadre, who were moved by the home ministry.

“As of now, every officer we are pulling out of Delhi is being compensated for. We posted five officers recently. But if the situation demands, we will be constrained to pull out more,” the official said.

EDUCATION

PIONEER, JAN 26, 2014

KEJRIWAL INCREASES WORKLOAD OF SCHOOL TEACHERS TO 45 HOURS PER WEEK

The Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal on Saturday ordered an increase in the working hours of school teachers to 45 hours per week. Now, school teachers' working in Government/Government aided and unaided recognised schools will have to devote 45 hours teaching per week.

The existing time for teachers in summers is 7.30 am to 1.30 pm or 8 am to 2 pm, but now the new timings are 7.15 am to 2.45 pm. Similarly, the existing time for teachers in winters is 7.30 am to 1.30 pm or 8 am to 2 pm and the new timings are 7.15 am to 2.45 pm. The existing time for teachers working in double shift schools in summers is 7.00 am to 12.30 pm (morning shift) or 1 pm to 6.30 pm (evening shift), but now the new timings are 6.45 am to 2.15 pm (morning shift) and 1.00 pm to 6.30 pm (evening shift).

Similarly, the existing time for teachers working in double shifts in winters is 7.30 am to 12.40 pm and 1 pm to 6.10 pm and now the new timings are 7.15 am to 2.45 pm and 10.45 am to 6.15 pm. The orders were passed by Right to Education (RTE) branch under Sections 19 and 25 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act. The above timings are applicable with immediate effect. However, there will be no change in existing timings of students.

HINDU, JAN 29, 2014

Padma Shri to DU V-C evokes sharp reactions

VIJETHA S.N.

Delhi University Vice-Chancellor Dinesh Singh, whose public persona went national last year, courtesy the controversial four-year undergraduate programme, is among those selected to receive the Padma Shri this year. Like the FYUP, even this honour seems all set to be mired in controversy.

The Delhi University Teachers' Association, which is presently dominated by the Left-affiliated Democratic Teachers' Front, has been at loggerheads with the V-C for his reforms, which were accomplished despite fierce opposition. DUTA has vociferously stated that this was no honour for the University and it was all done in an attempt to slowly take away funding for education.

"The awarding of the Padma Shri to the Prof. Singh is but a carrot to other V-Cs. It's inciting them to transgress democratic decision making, academic freedom in order to further the Government's agenda of increasing enrolment without spending on additional teachers and infrastructure," said DUTA president Nandita Narain.

However, Prof. Singh has many well-wishers who said he had made them proud. The Vice-Chancellor has been known for taking on the teaching community in a direct manner, which was unprecedented in the university's history.

Colleges, well-reputed as well as the lesser-known, would suddenly receive a surprise visit and be severely reprimanded if classes weren't taking place. Suspensions and replacements were common.

The Antardhvani festival was also his idea to give students an all-inclusive, inter-college university fest, mostly for the benefit of students not studying in fancy colleges with their own fests. The admission process for the physically-challenged and those belonging to the categories was also made easier.

However, the DUTA has always claimed that benefits for teachers in his reforms or agendas were almost nil. It has also accused him of being high-handed in his dealings with its members, and of disregarding their views, despite being a democratically elected body. It has also accused him of "bull-dozing" all his reforms without proper thought and with complete disregard for the university processes.

ELECTIONS

BUSINESS LINE, JAN 31, 2014

Now, Plan panel to help Govt in preparing election strategy

“You may call this role changing or rather addition in prescribed role. In fact, its role will not just be restricted to provide advice and guidance for the formulation of Five-Year Plans, Annual Plans, State Plans, Monitoring Plan Programmes, Projects and Schemes, but also as a key strategist to the poll campaign,” a senior Government official told *Business Line* .

This new exercise will be on an informal basis, the official said adding that the Commission is expected to work on three areas – financial issues, flagship programmes and benefits to different professions.

Key indicators

The official said that on the Government’s request the Commission is preparing a comprehensive chart on key fiscal indicators during 10 years of UPA Government vis-à-vis the six years of NDA Government. These indicators include fiscal deficit, the current account deficit, inflation besides growth scenario.

The Government has claimed that the average growth rate during 10 years of UPA (2004-2014) was 7.7 per cent in comparison to 6.2 per cent during 1994-2004.

The Commission has also been asked to give details about State-wise allocation of funds for various flagships programmes.

Currently, the Centre runs flagship schemes such as Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, National Rural Health Mission, Integrated Child Development Services, National Rural Health Mission, National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Mid Day Meal Scheme, and Backward Regions Grant Fund besides others.

This new exercise will be on an informal basis and the Commission is expected to work on three areas – financial issues, flagship programmes and benefits to different professions.

TIMES OF INDIA, JAN 29, 2014

EC considers raising poll expense limit by 30%

[Bharti Jain,](#)

The raise in the poll expenditure would revise the existing ceiling of Rs 40 lakh for a parliamentary poll to around Rs 52 lakh, and that for an assembly poll from Rs 16 lakh to nearly Rs 21 lakh.

NEW DELHI: With general elections round the corner, the [Election Commission](#) has begun to debate a possible hike in individual poll expenditure ceiling as well as issue of guidelines to regulate contents of party manifestos. Sources in the commission told TOI that a 30 per cent hike in poll spending limit was under consideration, and a final call may be taken after consulting political parties at the all-party meeting convened by the EC on February 4.

The EC last week began discussing a proposal to raise the individual poll expenditure limit by nearly 30%. In absolute terms, this would revise the existing ceiling of Rs 40 lakh for a parliamentary poll to around Rs 52 lakh, and that for an assembly poll from Rs 16 lakh to nearly Rs 21 lakh.

"EC, by convention, revises the expenditure limit every five years. Though the last revision was carried out in 2011, given the inflationary pressures, there is a view within the commission that the ceiling must be revisited and fixed at a more realistic level," said a commission official.

However, there is also a counterview against revision of the expenditure limit. A look at the expenditure statements filed by candidates in the past few assembly polls indicate that a majority of candidates spend less than 50% of the expenditure limit. "If even the existing limit is not being exhausted, how do you justify raising it further?" asked former chief election commissioner N Gopaldasami. "It is possible that candidates are not declaring their real expenditure, which may well run into crores. So, a 30 per cent hike may not make any difference," he added.

Besides, EC sources said, no demand has been received by the panel for a hike in the existing ceiling.

Another key poll reform envisaged ahead of Lok Sabha polls is issue of guidelines on party manifestos, seeking to regulate poll freebies as directed by the Supreme Court in a July 2013 order. A majority of political parties are opposed to restrictions on poll promises with financial implications, and had argued at an all-party meeting called by EC in August 2013 that "freebies" were related to the Directive Principles of State Policy.

Subsequently, the EC drafted a pragmatic set of guidelines that allow poll "freebies" to be included in party manifestos as long as they are targeted at economically and socially weaker sections, religious minorities, women and populations living in remote, border or insurgency/disaster-hit areas.

In other words, across-the-board freebies like mixers, grinders and colour TVs to each household were proposed to be curtailed as they tend to benefit even the non-deserving by default.

These draft guidelines may now be circulated at the all-party meeting on February 4, and the views of various parties elicited ahead of a final EC order notifying the norms.

ENVIRONMENT

HINDUSTAN TIMES, JAN 30, 2014

Delhi world's most polluted city: Study

Chetan Chauhan

It's no surprise that pollution is a perpetual problem in India. But it's definitely disheartening to hear that India has slipped 32 ranks in the global Environment Performance Index (EPI) 2014 to rank a lowly 155 and its capital Delhi has earned the dubious tag of being the world's most polluted city.

A comparative study of 178 countries on nine environmental parameters released earlier this month by the US-based Yale University shows that one of the world's fastest growing economies is a disaster on the environmental front. What's worse, India's pollution levels could be playing havoc with the health of its citizens. "A bottom performer on nearly every policy issue included in the 2014 EPI, with the exception of forests, fisheries and water resources, India's performance lags most notably in the protection of human health from environmental harm," said a statement issued by Yale.

The study described India's air pollution as the worst in the world, tying with China in terms of the proportion of population exposed to average air pollution levels exceeding World Health Organisation (WHO) thresholds.

A deeper look at the data gathered by a Nasa satellite showed that Delhi had the highest particulate matter 2.5 pollution levels followed by Beijing. Delhi, with 8.1 million registered vehicles, has repeatedly beaten the Chinese capital on particulate matter pollution.

The high PM2.5 pollution caused by high vehicle density and industrial emissions is the reason for the dense smog that has been engulfing Delhi during the winter months in the last few years, with adverse health implications. And while Beijing's infamous smog has hogged headlines and prompted government action, even led to the announcement of rewards for cutting back on pollution, the dangers in Delhi have been largely ignored.

According to a study by the Harvard International Review, every two in five persons in Delhi suffer from respiratory ailments. The Lancet's Global Health Burden 2013 report termed air pollution the sixth biggest human killer in India. The WHO last year termed air pollution carcinogenic.

Particles smaller than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM2.5 in shorthand) are fine enough to lodge deep in human lung and blood tissue and cause diseases ranging from stroke to lung cancer, the Yale study said.

Anumita Roy Chaudhary, executive director of Delhi-based advocacy group Centre for Science and Environment, said policy-makers have failed to take the kind of action needed to check phenomenal growth in air pollution in India. "The gains of the

introduction of CNG in 2000 have been lost. We are heading for dark days if policy-makers fail to wake up to the growing environmental health hazard,” she said.

The Central Pollution Control Board’s report of 2011 said only two cities, Kochi and Coimbatore, met the national ambient air quality standards, which are six times higher than WHO standards. Air pollution in half of the 280 Indian cities monitored has been termed critical or hazardous for human health. “Air pollution levels in almost all cities are on the upward trend,” said a CPCB scientist.

HOUSING

HINDUSTAN TIMES, JAN 30, 2014

Post-independence iconic buildings of Delhi to get heritage tag

Contemporary iconic buildings in the capital that came up in the post-independence period would soon get the 'heritage' tag on the lines of protected structures from medieval or colonial eras.

The **Delhi Urban Art Commission** (DUAC) believes that buildings constructed post-independence in Delhi need to be preserved for their historical, cultural or architectural value.

It had asked the Indian **National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage** (Intach), a conservation NGO, to draw up a list of such iconic buildings.

Following a study, the NGO submitted a list of 60 buildings that includes the Asiad Village, British Council Library, Ashoka Hotel, Pragati Maidan's Hall of Nations etc., which could be protected.

The shortlist is being further pruned before being submitted to the union urban development ministry.

Guidelines for preserving these buildings have also been made that keeps into account preservation and maintenance of these structures but the norms wouldn't be as stringent as those for monuments from the medieval era, which include not allowing any construction within 100 metres of the monuments.

"We want preservation and revival of such buildings and the sooner the guidelines are implemented, the better," said DUAC chairman Raj Rewal.

"Such buildings, which are a part of the city's life, should be well preserved and can also be part of the tourist map," he said.

Eminent architect and convenor of Intach's Delhi chapter, AGK Menon, said that the list has been drawn up after consultation and debates with other organisations.

"The main idea is to conserve our modern heritage. We want people to understand that a structure doesn't have to be necessarily ancient or medieval or 100 years old to be considered heritage," he said.

What triggered the idea was the demolition of the iconic Chanakya cinema -- which was based on an award-winning design and considered symbolic of post-independence architecture -- some years ago to make way for a multiplex.

Plans to alter Pragati Maidan as part of its revamp also had a hand in the move.

“We have included such buildings that tell the story of modern Indian architecture and have contributed to the city’s growth. Chanakya cinema’s demolition was a huge loss and the new guidelines will eliminate similar threats to our contemporary heritage,” Menon said.

“The list includes various categories such as residential, institutional and public buildings and even campuses such as Jawaharlal Nehru University,” he said.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

TELEGRAPH, JAN 29, 2013

LESSONS IN THE SPRING

India must move forward on Kashmir and Pakistan: Diplomacy: K.P. Nayar

A new government that will come into office after the Lok Sabha elections will have the rare luxury of an opportunity to move forward on Kashmir and even resolve other festering disputes with Pakistan. If the new leadership is perspicacious, if it shows imagination and if it can be persevering. If, if, if...

The compulsion for moving forward is very much there: India, now at the crossroads of a new era in geopolitics will once again be stranded by the receding tide of history if it does not resolve its neighbourhood problems, most notably the ones with Pakistan. The opportunity for moving forward is offered by the possibility that by thinking out of the box, a clear prospect of reduced terrorism within the country can be enhanced in the next five years of its tenure. It is a chance that no prime minister since Lal Bahadur Shastri had — not Indira Gandhi, not Rajiv Gandhi, not even Atal Bihari Vajpayee. To understand this possibility, just look at what is left of the Arab Spring, which spawned so much hope when it all began this month three years ago with the ouster of the president, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, in Tunisia in the so-called Jasmine Revolution and then spread in a welter this week three years ago to Cairo's historic Tahrir Square.

For the first time since the Islamic world's hatred of the United States of America was dramatically acted upon by a group of determined terrorists on September 11, 2001, the US is no longer the constant target of the global *jihad*. Of course, terrorists will not miss any opportunity to harm the US if that chance came their way, but their core energy is now focused elsewhere. As the new year winds its way through the calendar, regimes in the Arab world have become the main target of *jihadists*, for a change, because these regimes have, for all practical purposes, crushed the Arab Spring and, with it, the cherished hopes of millions of Arabs and other Muslims across the globe. Just as this has an impact on the US, there is a silver lining for India in this transformation and the next government in New Delhi must seize this opportunity.

There is no need for any tea leaves to divine the scenario that is most likely to unfold in the foreseeable future: enough clues were available at the Geneva peace talks (Mark II) on Syria, which opened in Geneva last week. It is clear from the prognosis at the talks, so far, that President Bashar al-Assad's side has got the upper hand. They may even have hijacked the agenda of the conference so far. After a week of negotiations in Geneva, the idea of peace talks appears to have become an end in itself. Such a scenario is not unfamiliar in an Arab context. Just look at the Arab-Israeli peace process: the entire international community's effort for some years has been to get peace talks resumed and to keep them going. If the same fate befalls the process unveiled last week during Geneva II, the most likely outcome will be that talks go on for the sake of talks while Assad's government continues its well-armed and logistically executed crackdown by a trained

Syrian army — and backed by the even better organized Hezbollah from Lebanon — against the rebels.

The secular or moderate opposition to Assad then gets squeezed into an untenable position of having to confront both the Syrian army and the religious extremist rebel militias while the entire opposition becomes radicalized as in Libya. That would give the regime in Damascus bigger and more credible excuses to intensify its crackdown on the opposition by branding them as terrorists with ever greater justification. Which, in turn, then prompts *jihadists* from all over the world to rally behind the Syrian opposition. It is Afghanistan's history repeating itself, few people learning the lessons from that chapter in history that created Osama bin Laden.

Not far from Syria, another spring awakening that was heralded with much hope — in Egypt — is rapidly turning into a recipe for terrorist control of it. The bombs that exploded in Cairo last week on the eve of the third anniversary of the uprising, which swept Hosni Mubarak out of power, is proof of the way that movement is headed.

As in Damascus, the military rulers in Cairo, too, shoulder their share of responsibility for ignoring the lessons of history that spawned Osama bin Laden. How else does anyone explain the 98.1 per cent electoral support with which the Egyptian people approved their country's new Constitution this month — a statute that favours the military, which overthrew an elected president, Mohamed Mursi, in July and incarcerated him.

The army's spin masters could, of course, claim that a 98.1 per cent vote allowed for and recorded dissent in this month's referendum unlike Saddam Hussein's re-election in 2002, when the full 100 per cent of Iraqis voted for the dreaded dictator. Military rulers in the Arab world have never absorbed the lesson that when dissent, even in its mildest form, is put down, the people are bound to turn to violence. This is what the Islamists are waiting for.

Actually, that wait may already be over. The return of al Qaeda fighters to take control of the cities of Fallujah and Ramadi in Iraq, this month, signals a new determination by *jihadists* to assert themselves against yet another Arab government, which they see as not Islamic enough. As in Syria, here too moderate Sunni tribesmen are being squeezed from both sides: by the Shia-dominated Iraqi army of the prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, on the one side, and by al Qaeda's ruthless fighters on the other. That leaves few options open for Sunnis in Iraq, except joining the *jihadists*.

Even in Lebanon, where the political fault-lines have been clear for decades — yet unchanged so as to guarantee stability of a peculiar Lebanese variety — equations are now changing, providing a new opening for the extension of a new brand of terror that is sweeping the Arab world from the Maghreb to the Gulf. The recent detention in Beirut of one of the most wanted men in Saudi Arabia, al Qaeda's Majid bin Mohamed al-Majid, in the wake of a terrorist bombing of Iran's embassy in Beirut has drawn Lebanon into a pan-Arab fight between structured governments and bands of resolute terror groups with a clear anti-establishment agenda.

Such deepening fissures across the Arab world will mean that it is reasonable to assume that, for several years to come, the energy of the global *jihād* will be focused on fighting regimes across the Middle East. Secular India, which is anathema to the global *jihād*, had come perilously close to being in the firing range of these terrorists some decades ago when hopes rose of a settlement of the Arab-Israeli dispute. India was again briefly in their range when *jihādists* thought they had obtained free passes to Arab capitals in the wake of the spring awakening three years ago.

That left the *jihādists* free to pursue an expansion of their conquests to countries like India that are both secular and have a non-Muslim majority — or so they thought. The biggest threat to India's multi-religious fabric does not come from the Bharatiya Janata Party or its affiliates, as some people assume. Such a long-term threat emanates from the global *jihād*, which Pakistan, too, has skillfully exploited in the past. But with Pakistan's establishment itself in the firing range of *jihādists*, Islamabad's room for manoeuvre against India, has been significantly reduced.

That too offers a rare window of opportunity for the next government in New Delhi. But openings like this will not last forever. So the time to think out of the box on Kashmir and neighbourhood relations linked to disputes with Pakistan may be soon after the Lok Sabha elections, so that if and when the Islamist focus shifts away from the Arab world, there is less excuse for the *jihādists* to concentrate on India

INTERNET

ECONOMIC TIMES, JAN 31, 2014

Microsoft board to name Satya Nadella as CEO; plans to replace Chairman Bill Gates: Report

Indian-American Nadella, was promoted to run Microsoft's fast expanding internet-based computing initiative in July last year.

SEATTLE: Microsoft Corp's board is preparing to name internal executive [Satya Nadella](#) as the software company's next chief executive, [Bloomberg](#) reported on Thursday, citing unnamed sources it said were briefed on the CEO search process.

The board is also considering replacing Chairman [Bill Gates](#), possibly with [lead](#) independent director [John Thompson](#), Bloomberg said.

Sources had previously told Reuters that Microsoft was down to a "handful" of candidates, including Nadella, executive vice president of the cloud and enterprise group, and [Tony Bates](#), executive vice president of business development, plus at least one external candidate.

Bloomberg added the Nadella plans had not been finalized. Microsoft declined to comment.

Microsoft [shares](#) rose 0.8 per cent to \$37.15 after hours, after gaining slightly in regular Nasdaq trading.

Nadella, a native of Hyderabad, India, was promoted to run Microsoft's fast expanding internet-based computing initiative in July last year as part of current CEO Steve Ballmer's radical re-organization of the company.

Before that he was in charge of Microsoft's growing server and tools business, following on from high-level roles in Microsoft's Office and Bing search engine units.

"He's a solid choice," offering continuity of strategy and proven execution, said Sid Parakh, an analyst at fund firm McAdams Wright Ragen,

Some investors had campaigned for an external CEO who might be more likely to shake up the company and reward shareholders with greater dividends and share buybacks, but Parakh said that did not [mean](#) Nadella would necessarily be unpopular with Wall Street.

"Any new CEO is going to have to have the shareholders' say in mind. But it's not certain that will translate into actions," said Parakh.

There have been calls for months for Gates to step down from a group of investors who believe the company's co-founder is a block to radical change and investor-friendly moves at the technology giant.

Some investors have urged Thompson to consider the CEO role himself, sources told Reuters this week. One person close to the board told Reuters on Thursday that Thompson was not in the frame to lead the company, but did not rule out a senior executive role, such as Chairman.

Microsoft's CEO search has taken longer than most expected when Ballmer announced his plan last August to retire within a year.

In a blog post on the company's website in December, Thompson emphasized the need for a CEO with good tech bona fides and "an ability to lead a highly technical organization and work with top technical talent."

Thompson, who leads the four-member CEO search committee, said at the time he expected the panel to reach a decision "in the early part of 2014."

The appointment of a company veteran like Nadella, which follows a months-long search and long flirtation with outsiders such as Ford Motor Co Chief Executive [Alan Mulally](#), could disappoint some investors who were hoping for a more radical transformation at the software giant.

"While many on the Street are now expecting Mr. Nadella to get the CEO spot, we believe filling this position with a core Microsoft insider will disappoint those hoping for a fresh strategic approach (e.g. potential breakup of enterprise/consumer, Xbox spin off) an outside executive could have brought to the table," FBR analyst Daniel Ives said in a research note, adding that innovation and fresh strategies were essential for the company.

"With that said, we believe Mr. Nadella's prior roles in the Online Services Division, Business Division, and most recently as president of the Server and Tools business position him as a strong internal candidate with a broad set of knowledge around Microsoft's massive product portfolio," Ives wrote.

"While many on the Street are now expecting Mr. Nadella to get the CEO spot, we believe filling this position with a core Microsoft insider will disappoint those hoping for a fresh strategic approach (e.g. potential breakup of enterprise/consumer, Xbox spin off) an outside executive could have brought to the table," FBR analyst Daniel Ives said in a research note, adding that innovation and fresh strategies were essential for the company.

"With that said, we believe Mr. Nadella's prior ..

LIBRARIES

HINDU, JAN 29, 2014

Public libraries to get a facelift

ready for a makeoverLibraries are poised to have Wi-Fi enabled reading rooms with modern furniture, lighting, carrels for scholars, modern signage and many other facilities.Photo: K.K. Mustafah

Public libraries are set for a major facelift, starting this year, under the National Mission on Libraries (NML) to check the dwindling footfalls and give a boost to reading habits.

“Public libraries have a crucial role in dissemination of knowledge and information. Through innovative ways, we are going to engage citizens in both physical and digital space and help them access reading material in print and electronic form with the help of Information and Communication Technology (ICT),” Ravindra Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Culture said.

Kolkata-based Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation is the nodal agency for the execution of this Rs 400 crore project which will modernise 629 district libraries in the country and connect them with each other. The project is scheduled to be launched by President Pranab Mukherjee on February 3 in Kolkata. “We plan to accomplish this modernisation through a two-pronged strategy: improvement of infrastructure and upgradation of technology in libraries on the one hand and capacity building on the other,” Singh said.

Libraries are set to have Wi-Fi enabled reading rooms with modern furniture, lighting system, carrels for scholars, senior citizens and specially abled persons, modern signage, power backup, purified drinking water equipment and washrooms.

In addition, there will be games facilities for children, besides Internet, conference room, recording room and training-cum-meeting room.

“Since creation of new institutions or libraries may not be feasible, it is better to upgrade the existing libraries by improving their infrastructure,” K K Banerjee, Director General of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation said.

Cataloguing will also be done for not only of books and journals but also of all policies of the government in public domain to facilitate easy access and research work. Efforts will also be made to provide reading material in a multilingual mode.PTI

“By providing reading material in different languages, we intend to facilitate universal access. As a part of the objective, libraries will be encouraged to create more digital resources by digitising relevant reading material in various languages. Our vision is to create a network of public libraries where information is digitised and easily exchanged,” Banerjee said.

PANCHAYAT

INDIAN EXPRESS, JAN 25, 2014

Orissa woman sarpanch to represent India at US meet

A 28-year-old MBA graduate from Sikkim Manipal University who quit her job as an investment banker at IDBI Bank in Berhampur, Orissa, to become a sarpanch in a backward panchayat of Ganjam district in 2012, will represent India in the International Visitors Leadership Programme on State and Local Governments in the US next month. Arati Devi became sarpanch of Dhunkapada grampanchayat under Polasara block at 27, becoming the youngest female sarpanch in the country. Her achievements were highlighted by The Indian Express in March 2013.

The IVLP is one of the US government's prestigious professional exchange programmes for foreign opinion leaders and has so far hosted more than 130,000 participants. Former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi, Morarji Desai and Atal Bihari Vajpayee have participated in the programme.

"It's a major achievement for me. I never expected that I would be travelling to US and meeting the President. It would be a huge learning experience for me. In about a year, I have managed to do a lot of welfare work for my panchayat which I would share at the programme," said Arati.

POLICE

TRIBUNE, JAN 29, 2014

A new dispensation for policing Delhi

Kanwar Sandhu

WHILE one may not agree with the tactics adopted by Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and his team in Delhi last week, one can't discount the fact that the Aam Admi Party (AAP) highlighted very forcefully a serious constitutional anomaly on the control and superintendence of the law and order machinery in the national capital of Delhi. Unlike elsewhere in the country, where law and order is a state subject, as mandated by the Constitution, in the national capital, the Delhi Police function under and report to the Lieutenant Governor, which in fact means the Union Home Ministry.

The current situation prevails because Delhi was granted only partial statehood in 1991 through the 69th Constitution Amendment. This has created huge functional problems for the government of the day in Delhi and earlier governments in Delhi — including the Congress government of Sheila Dixit — raised this issue many a time. Unfortunately, even during the NDA regime in 2003, the proposal to grant full statehood to Delhi did not propose entrusting the Delhi Government with superintendence over the police.

The Union Government justifies keeping the Delhi Police under its direct control and supervision on the ground of national security — Delhi is, after all, not only the seat of Parliament, the Supreme Court, the Union ministries and the military command, but also home to about a hundred embassies.

As of now, Article 239AA of the Constitution designates the Lieutenant Governor as the administrator of Delhi. Sub-section 3(a) of the same Article does not give the Legislative Assembly of Delhi the power to make laws on policing and law and order. This power lies with Parliament. Similarly, Section 4 of the Delhi Police Act 1978 vests the superintendence of the police in the administrator, thus by law, the superintendence of the Delhi police comes under the Lieutenant Governor.

However, since the prevailing system is not only contrary to the constitutional provisions and also peoples' aspirations, the fault-line in the policing system in Delhi calls for an immediate correction, while keeping national security concerns intact. This can only be done through a series of legislation by Parliament.

One could draw a lesson from the system that prevails in the national capitals of countries like the United States of America and Great Britain. In the US, for example, Washington DC, by virtue of being the national capital, is a "federal district". It is not a part of any state and is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Congress. Quite like our capital of Delhi, Washington too houses not just the top executive offices but also the national legislature, the Supreme Court and foreign embassies. Since the 1970s, it is governed by a Mayor-in-Council, though the Congress has the powers to overturn the local laws.

The Metropolitan Police Department of the Washington District of Columbia, referred to as MPD, is the municipal police force. Due to its location within an independent federal city, the MPD exercises the standard functions of a local police force and also handles certain activities normally considered to be within the domain of a state police agency such as maintaining a sex offender registry. Its duties include supplementing the various uniformed federal law enforcement agencies like the US Secret Service, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the United States Capitol Police and the Park Police.

Unlike Delhi, which has been granted statehood, though partial, Washington DC is a federal conclave. Yet the police personnel are not employees of the federal government but are under the DC municipal government. The MPD, with a total strength of about 4,500 personnel and headed by a Chief of Police, is accountable to the Mayor and the DC Council, which are elected positions.

The MPD has concurrent jurisdiction with other federal law enforcement agencies, including the US Capitol Hill Police, whose role is primarily to protect the US Congress and the assemblies throughout the US. Similarly, it has concurrent jurisdiction with the DC Park Police, which also has a designated role and jurisdiction. The MPD also has a concurrent jurisdiction with the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which is both an intelligence-gathering and a law-enforcement federal force.

In London too an almost similar system exists now. Within the city of London, which has only a few thousand permanent residents but a workforce of more than three lakh commuters daily, the 1,300-odd personnel of the City of London Police are governed by the Common Council. The remainder Greater London Area is the responsibility of Metropolitan Police Service (MPS or the Met). Till 2000, the MPS was controlled directly by the Home Secretary. Then the Metropolitan Police Authority was set up and its members appointed by the Mayor of London, the London Assembly and several independent members, though the Metropolitan Police Commissioner continues to be appointed by the Home Secretary. This force, which is about 50,000 strong, is governed by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime. An Independent Police Complaints Commission acts as the oversight agency. Though there are specialised forces like the Ministry of Defence Police for protecting MOD properties and British Transport Police for protecting the rail network, the statutory responsibility for law and order is that of the two police departments reporting to local elected bodies.

The federal nature of our Constitution mandates law and order as a state subject, though attempts have been made to tamper with this provision. In 1976, for example, during the Emergency (1975-77), a controversial amendment was made to permit the Centre to send its armed police to any state but in 1978 this clause was further amended to make such deployment dependent on the consent of the state government concerned. Although the eight central police forces and three para-military forces of the country have designated tasks, they are deployed for specific law and order roles from time to time. Yet none of them is a typical police force, which can independently enforce law and order, besides investigating crime.

Until some years ago, the Union government was without a designated law-enforcing police under its direct control. However, since 2008 when the National Investigation Agency (NIA) was set up to control terror in the wake of the Mumbai attacks, the situation has changed drastically. The NIA is empowered to deal with terror-related crimes across states without special permission. Besides terror, this also deals with a host of other crimes such as drug trafficking and counterfeit currency, which are also seen as related to terror and cross-border crimes. In such cases, the NIA has concurrent jurisdiction with the states, which can also probe such cases. Apparently, the Centre took advantage of the extraordinary situation arising out of the Mumbai attacks to push for such an agency. Not only that, the NIA Act also provides for Special NIA Courts, which have the same powers as sessions courts under the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973, for the trial of offenders accused of such offences.

In view of the demand in Delhi, what could be done is to further empower the NIA through amendments to its Act to give it greater superintendence and law-enforcement powers concerning certain Government of India institutions in Delhi and elsewhere. It could ensure the security of the Rashtrapati Bhawan, Parliament, the Supreme Court, the country's international airports, top executive offices and various embassies, which could all be declared a "Union Security Zone". In certain areas and aspects, the NIA can have concurrent powers with the Delhi Police and other state police forces. This will ensure that the vital Central institutions are not under the Delhi Police and the Union Home Ministry has a direct control over these. A safety clause could be inserted in the law to further enable Parliament to overturn any law that it feels could jeopardise the security of the country. In fact, even in Washington DC, such a power has been vested in the Congress.

This, in turn, could pave the way for having the Delhi Police under the Delhi Government, just like the MPS in London and the MPD in Washington DC, with certain other law-enforcement agencies having concurrent jurisdiction. The key to effective police functioning within a state is building strong community relations and these can come about only through strong contacts with all sections of the citizenry. Currently, the Delhi Police, being independent of the Delhi Government, perhaps have the advantage of being able to ward off political interference of a certain kind. But, at the same time, the disadvantages outweigh the advantages; functioning as a de-facto federal force, the Delhi Police are devoid of intimate people-connect and also oversight mechanisms which are the essential hallmarks of a democratic system.

A re-organisation of the reporting mechanism of the Delhi Police is also desirable because a state government can deliver only when all its organs dealing with its citizens report to it. The sooner the Delhi Police is brought under the control of the Delhi Government the better because given the nature of the people-oriented approach of the Aam Admi Party, issues like the one which cropped up last week will continue to arise.

The suggestion to empower the Delhi Government by giving it superintendence over the police will prevent a situation of the kind that happened in Delhi, where a minister could not direct a police official to do something. It is ironical that the issue in Delhi that

sparked off the controversy relates to a sex and drug offence – the kind of thing that would have been investigated by the Metropolitan Police in London or Washington DC reporting to the municipality or the Council. It is in fact odd that the Union Home Ministry or the Lieutenant Governor should be trying to exercise control over such local issues.

What should be done

- * Delhi was granted partial statehood in 1991 through the 69th Constitution Amendment. This has created functional problems for the government of the day in Delhi
- * The NDA proposal to grant full statehood to Delhi did not propose entrusting the Delhi Government with the power of superintendence over the police.
- * Section 4 of the Delhi Police Act vests the superintendence of the police in the administrator, the Lieutenant Governor, who reports to the Home Ministry
- * Unlike Delhi, which has been granted partial statehood, Washington DC is a federal conclave. Yet the police personnel are not employees of the federal government but are under the DC municipal government.
- * In London the statutory responsibility for law and order is that of the two police departments reporting to the local elected bodies.

PASSPORT

TIMES OF INDIA

[Aparajita Ray](#),

BANGALORE: Come November 2015, and your [handwritten passport](#) won't take you on a foreign holiday. Neither can you fly out if your little blue book has a 20-year validity. This is in keeping with rules of the [International Civil Aviation Organization](#) (ICAO), which has decided to do away with non-machine readable (handwritten) passports globally. India is part of the ICAO.

This rule will come into effect from November 25, 2015. Countries under the [ICAO](#) will not issue visas to persons holding passports that are handwritten or valid for 20 years. Even passports valid beyond November 24, 2015, will not be accepted for visa. Technically, these passports, issued before 2001, will be worthless unless they are renewed.

PS Karthigeyan, regional passport officer in Karnataka, said there is no data available of people who hold these kinds of passports. "People have already started inquiring and renewing their old passports," he said.

The process for renewal is the same: the applicant has to produce the passport to provide details, and can opt for either the normal or tatkal method. Data available from 2002

Handwritten passports were issued before 2001, and are being phased out in many countries. The ministry has issued a circular on this. We've no data of how many such passport holders are there in the state, as there was no data storage before 2002, when we started computerized services. Those whose passports with 20-year validity extend beyond November 25, 2015, will also have to renew their passports.

— PS Karthigeyan, regional passport officer, Karnataka

Getting a new book

- * Register on the website as new applicant
- * Download e-application form on the home page, and save the copy to upload later
- * After registering, you will be given a login ID and password
- * For type of passport on the second screen, click on 'reissue of passport' and then on normal or tatkal options, depending on urgency of renewal

- * Fill up details in the next few screens, as directed by web portal
- * Enter details of previous passport
- * Complete details and submit form online
- * Schedule appointment online and print application form to take to Passport Seva Kendra for interview
- * Take original and photocopies of proof of identity, age and address

Payment options

- * Pay online through credit/debit card, internet banking (SBI and associate banks only) and [SBI](#)challan
- * If you apply to reissue passport under tatkal, pay the fee as per normal service online, and remaining amount after the application is accepted by officials at Passport Seva Kendra
- * Police verification for tatkal is done after delivery of passport; for normal service, it is done before delivery of passport
- * Fee for reissue of passport under validity expired/due to expire category for citizens above 18 years: Rs 1,500 for normal service, Rs 3,500 for tatkal service
- * Fee for reissue of passport of same categories for less than 15 years: Rs 1,000 for normal service, Rs 3,000 for tatkal

POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

HINDU, JAN 29, 2014

Anarchist or activist?

DIPANKAR GUPTA

Like it or hate it, but hand it to the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) for forcing us to think democracy. Contrast this moment with the Emergency and one thing stands out clearly; we need both order and dissent to stay alive. Take one of them out of the equation and democracy has a hard time hanging in: it first flips and then flops.

From every angle, the Emergency was all about control; but then is today all about protests, no holds barred? From Anna's rally to the anti-rape agitations to Chief Minister Kejriwal's sit in and sleep-in earlier this month, discussions on this subject are only getting louder. Even the President of India sounded the bugle in his speech on the eve of Republic Day when he warned against anarchy taking over constitutionalism.

Across time

If a Chief Minister is anarchist because he took to the streets, how then would we label the late French President François Mitterrand? After all, in 1983 he gave a hero's welcome in the Élysée Palace, no less, to anti-racist protesters who were angry with his own government. In fact, in 1980, as leader of the Socialist Party, he joined a widely popularised street march against attacks on Jewish people, along with Pierre Chevènement and Michel Rocard. Were they all anarchists? Or think of Bertrand Russell and his activism against nuclear bombs. Another anarchist or a well-meaning democrat?

Clearly one person's anarchist could well be another person's activist. Go back a little in time and consider the demonstrations that brought in universal franchise or racial equality or the establishment of gay rights. Had these movements been banned, or dubbed as anarchist, our democracies would have been that much poorer. It is with the help of these protests that democracy grew and grew to give us this splendid shade under which most of us sit. It took decades of activism before women got the right to vote and before Blacks became legally equal to the rest in America; but who is complaining today?

Or, consider what is going on right now in Bangkok. The Thais want their government to go, but the leader refuses to budge till her corrupt brother is reinstated with full honours. Is the protest then anarchic? Or take Kiev, Ukraine — another real time uprising. This one is against the government's anti-protest laws [which the Ukrainian President has now agreed to scrap] and its inexplicable decision to pull out of the race for an EU membership. Should the democratic opposition leader, Arseniy Yatsenyuk, be called an anarchist for turning down the position of Prime Minister that might have brought peace to the country? Instead, he prefers to be with the agitators in the bitter cold, with not much more than a muffler for comfort. Was Tahrir Square a waste of time and another anarchic explosion? What indeed of Tunisia, where the Arab Spring began?

We have not mentioned Mahatma Gandhi or Nelson Mandela, or any of the other freedom fighters of the past who were also once called anarchists. This is because times have changed and we are no longer battling colonialism, dictatorships or apartheid. Today, democracies are troubled because their leaders wear earplugs and citizens shout in vain. The singular thing about democracy is that political rulers must earn their respect and not demand it, just because they are in office. This is what separates this form of governance from monarchy, racism and fascism.

When streets erupt in a democracy it is nearly always because institutions are not delivering as they had promised to. It is never a good idea to barricade popular voices by institutional walls. Is this why our President in his latest speech on the eve of Republic Day warned politicians not to make false promises for that would generate both heat and noise? Was he lamenting both the United Progressive Alliance's performance as much as cautioning politicians about their immediate future?

Disdain for democratic procedure

It is not as if democracies have never been challenged by genuine anarchism in the past, nor is it that they can easily protect themselves from such assaults in the future. The ones who stormed the Babri Masjid were anarchists, and so are the Maoists and religious/ethnic activists of today. What unites them all is their disdain for democratic procedure whose hallmark is non-violence. Anarchism, be warned, is not just about physical violence; it is as much about verbal violence as well. People tend to forget this, but that is how Gandhiji understood non-violence; it had to be both in word and in deed.

Gandhiji argued, as did Bertrand Russell, and scores of other believers of liberal democracy, that the moment voices are raised it is clear that violence has struck. Anger reveals a weak hand, for if the argument is a winning one, why be abusive? Supporters of the AAP demonstrated this spirit through the 2013 election in Delhi. Since then, it has compromised and condoned, at least, verbal instances of anarchy. Mr. Somnath Bharti, Delhi's Law Minister, may be in over his head with his new assignment, but that does not excuse his disgraceful choice of language. He has not just let the side down repeatedly, but has also given credence to the charge that the AAP borders on anarchism. Perhaps Mr. Kejriwal should hold a night school in good manners for his band.

Neither street demonstrations nor working from a makeshift office under a tent amounts to anarchism. It is violence, both physical and verbal, that invites anarchy more than anything else, whether or not such acts happen in the killing fields or in parliaments. Remember also, some of the most ruthless leaders in modern times were elected to power. This is why liberal democracy is not just about votes, but more about non-violence. If there is a striking family resemblance between anarchists and dictators it is because violence was mother's milk for both of them.

Nor is it anarchy to change one's political opinion. Liberal democracy would hardly be worth upholding if the freedom to absorb new information is not accompanied by the freedom to alter one's position. To bind people to a point of view in perpetuity can only

happen when knowledge flow is restricted and when political opposition is banned. In a liberal democracy, people must have the option to move and grow, but under one condition. They must, on each occasion, publicly justify the reasons for the switch. Once that is done, freely and openly, liberal democracy has nothing to complain about.

True, Mr. Kumar Vishwas was wrong in his remarks on Kerala's nurses, but that was done in his pre-AAP days and for which he has apologised anyway. Why should then his past haunt him now? Much worse things have happened. For example, Mr. Sanjay Nirupam and Mr. Chhagan Bhujbal left the Shiv Sena and joined the Congress/NCP without explaining what they found wrong with their earlier affiliations. Only Rangarajan Kumaramangalam attempted to provide a rationale for his move away from the Congress to the Bharatiya Janata Party, but not Ms Najma Heptullah. What also of Ms Renuka Chowdhury who has travelled from party to party before settling down in the Congress? Nobody has ever heard her explain why she first chose and then dumped the Telugu Desam Party. Liberal democracy is violated by opportunistic alliances of this kind and not when people give reasons for changing their minds.

The AAP has forced us to discuss all these issues again and that can only be good for democracy. In the fitness of things, Mr. Kejriwal and his followers must know that it is hard to be just a little bit anarchic. It is like catching the flu in the hallway. Once this strain enters the system it spreads itself all over. As bad practices push out the good, not only should the AAP sit up and take notice of anarchic elements within, but we too should acknowledge how non-violent protests enrich democracies.

A little anarchy is a dangerous thing, but a good protest is a joy forever!

(Dipankar Gupta is distinguished professor and director, Centre for Public Affairs and Critical Theory, Shiv Nadar University.)

When streets erupt in a democracy, it is nearly always because institutions are not delivering as they had promised to. It is never a good idea to barricade popular voices by institutional walls

STATESMAN, JAN 31, 2014

governor upset over ministers' absence at gandhi ghat

Barrackpore, 30 January: Governor Mr M K Narayanan today expressed his displeasure with the absence of state ministers from the function at Gandhi Ghat in Barrackpore to commemorate the death anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi.

The ministers were absent apparently because all of them were required to be present at the Trinamul Congress' Brigade Parade Ground rally today.

The Governor offered his tribute to the Father of the Nation during the event which is an annual feature.

Finding no representative from the state Cabinet Mr Narayanan said: “This is a state government programme but none of the state government ministers has come.”

Asked about the reason for this, the Governor told reporters to put the question before the state chief secretary. In the previous years, besides top bureaucrats from the state, at least one Cabinet minister used to participate in the event.

Convention requires a minister and a senior government official of the rank of chief secretary to be present at the function held every year at Gandhi Ghat. Though the chief secretary, Mr Sanjay Mitra, was present this year, none of the ministers were.

Last year, Mr Amit Mitra, the state finance minister, had attended the programme at Gandhi Ghat.

PIONEER, JAN 26, 2014

PRESIDENT TAKES A SWIPE AT KEJRI'S 'POPULIST ANARCHY'

Amid a debate over the AAP's dharna last week in the heart of the Capital and its populist agenda, President Pranab Mukherjee on Saturday made a veiled attack on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's street protests saying the Government is not a “charity shop” and “populist anarchy” cannot be a substitute for governance.

This apart, seeking to advise the citizens to firm up their decision to avoid handing out a fractured mandate in the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections, Mukherjee said in 2014, it could be catastrophic. In his address to the nation on the eve of the 65th Republic Day, Mukherjee said: “Those who seek the trust of voters must promise only what is possible. Government is not a charity shop. Populist anarchy cannot be a substitute for governance.”

He also had a word of caution saying, “false promises lead to disillusionment, which gives birth to rage, and that rage has one legitimate target — those in power”. The President said the rage will abate only when Governments deliver what they were elected to deliver: Social and economic progress, not at a snail's pace but with the speed of a racehorse. “Those in office must eliminate the trust deficit between them and the people. Those in politics should understand that every election comes with a warning sign — perform or perish,” he said.

Without naming Kejriwal, who recently staged a two-day dharna outside Rail Bhavan against the Centre, Mukherjee was critical of the AAP leader's style saying “elections do not give any person the licence to flirt with illusions”.

Kejriwal and his Cabinet colleagues had staged the dharna defying prohibitory orders demanding action against some policemen. With regard to the forthcoming general elections, the President said: “Each one of us is a voter; each one of us has a deep responsibility; we cannot let India down. It is time for introspection and action. A

fractured Government, hostage to whimsical opportunists, is always an unhappy eventuality...Who wins the coming election is less important than the fact that whosoever wins must have an undiluted commitment to stability, honesty, and the development of India.”

Terming corruption as a cancer that eroded the democracy and weakened the foundation of the state, he said, if Indians were enraged, it was because they were witnessing corruption and waste of national resources. “If Governments do not remove these flaws, voters will remove Governments.” Equally dangerous is the rise of hypocrisy in public life, he maintained.

Amidst the ongoing discussion over Telangana, Mukherjee said passions are rising whether there should be smaller States but the debate should conform to democratic norms. “A democratic nation is always involved in argument with itself. This is welcome, for we solve problems through discussion and consent, not force. However, healthy differences of opinion must not lead to an unhealthy strife within the polity,” He said in his second address from the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

As the Supreme Commander of armed forces, the President said mavericks who question the integrity of our armed services are irresponsible and should find no place in public life.

TIMES OF INDIA, JAN 31, 2014

Andhra assembly humiliates Congress, rejects Telangana bill

HYDERABAD: The Congress-dominated state assembly on Thursday rejected the [Andhra Pradesh Reorganization Bill](#), 2103, brutally exposing the shrinking authority of the Congress leadership and raising for it the cost of the political gambit on Telangana.

The outcome of the voice vote on the resolution moved by chief minister-turned-rebel [Kiran Kumar Reddy](#) to oppose the central bill was not surprising. The 159 Seemandhra MLAs, predictably, voted for the resolution while the 119 drawn from Telangana remained arrayed against it. It will not have any bearing on the decision on the Centre which, under the Constitution, has the final say in creation of new states.

However, the [UPA](#) will still be required to muster sufficient numbers in Parliament: a requirement that will be hard to meet if its principal rival, the BJP, decides to pile on its agony by insisting that the [Telangana bill](#) be treated as a constitutional amendment bill. This will raise the bar to two-thirds in both Houses: a tough task at a time when UPA has lost the authority to rustle up the strength.

But what made the voice vote an extraordinary political event was the en mass defiance of the Congress high command's diktat by MLAs who are still paid up members of the party. While the CM had already unfurled the flag of rebellion, sources said Speaker Nadenla Manohar too joined in the anti-Telangana show. Parliamentary affairs minister S

Sailajanath, sources said, collaborated with [Seemandhra MLAs](#) belonging to the rival TDP to ensure that MLAs from Telangana were not able to disrupt passage of the CM's anti-partition resolution.

Congress MPs from the Seemandhra region, sources said, were also involved in brokering the understanding with TDP.

This is an embarrassment enough for Congress in a state which was crucial for its wins in two straight Lok Sabha polls. But it should rankle even more because of the growing fear that the expected gains from Telangana may not be there to compensate the losses the party is set to suffer in Seemandhra region.

Although the Congress dismissed opinion polls predicting a debacle for it in the state as unreliable, senior party sources acknowledge off-the-record that the trend more or less tallies with their own feedback that they may not end up as the sole beneficiary of the "thanksgiving" vote in the Telangana region.

Party strategists reckoned that the decision to create Telangana would help them benefit at the expense of Telangana Rashtra Samiti. The trajectory drawn by psephologists suggest that the calculation may not come to pass, at least not in full.

The disappointment will deepen if the [BJP](#) insists that the reorganization bill be treated as a legislation aimed at amending the Constitution. The BJP has been among the original Telangana enthusiasts, and will be seen as obstructing statehood for a region where it has pockets of influence. However, it is under pressure from its likely ally N Chandrababu Naidu of [Telugu Desam Party](#) to calibrate its enthusiasm at least until Lok Sabha elections. Naidu has see-sawed over Telangana to settle for a position which opposes the central move without rejecting statehood for Telangana.

BJP has not announced its stand yet. Sources said with trends suggesting that it can get handsome returns from the state in partnership with Naidu, it may get tempted to nuance its position. The view that creation of Telangana will require rewriting Article 371D of the Constitution to ensure that people from the region continue to avail of preferential treatment they are guaranteed under the provision, is seen as legitimate. BJP can cite this to insist that the reorganization bill should clear the test prescribed for constitutional amendment bills if only to avert the delay likely to result from legal challenges on the ground of procedural infirmity.

Congress seems keen to ensure passage of the bill so that it can retrieve something from the remnants of its decade-long domination of power in the state with 42 Lok Sabha seats. However, sources concede that they cannot do much if the BJP insists on playing by the rule book and because of successful lobbying of smaller parties by both Naidu and Jaganmohan Reddy of YSR Congress. As a matter of fact, the activism during the last 10

sittings of the current Lok Sabha may only mark the party as the "villain" in Seemandhra without gains in Andhra Pradesh.

"Coming at a time when we are struggling to persuade DMK to revive the tie-up, and when our prospects are headed southwards in other states, the rejection of the bill in Hyderabad is disturbing and not merely for reasons of vanity," said a Congress source.

POWER INDUSTRY

HINDU, JAN 29, 2014

Govt recommends CAG audit of DIMTS

VISHAL KANT

The Aam Aadmi Party Government on Tuesday recommended an audit of the Delhi Integrated Multi-Modal Transit System (DIMTS) by the Comptroller and Auditor-General of India.

The DIMTS is a joint venture between the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi and Infrastructure Development and Finance Corporation, with each party having 50 per cent equity. The order comes around three weeks after the government ordered a CAG audit of the three power discoms in the city.

“The Cabinet approved a CAG audit of the DIMTS, a transport and infrastructure development company,” PWD Minister Manish Sisodia said.

PRESIDENTS

TELEGRAPH, JAN 31, 2014

ELDER STATESMAN

The president's first Republic Day address to the nation

Swapan Dasgupta

Those with a taste for historical fiction and counter-factual history may well find *The Windsor Faction* by the British writer, D.J. Taylor, published last year, quite absorbing. Set in the England of the nine months or so of the “phoney war” of 1939-40, it probes the fantasies and amateurish conspiracies of the small set — with a larger measure of public support — that sought to prevent a repeat of the Great War of 1914-18 by facilitating a negotiated settlement with Germany.

Although much of Taylor's brilliantly crafted exploration of the British upper-crust support for Hitler is based on actual events, there is a significant departure from the historical script. *The Windsor Faction* begins with the description of a quiet funeral in a village church in December 1936: the funeral of Wallis Simpson. “It is neither disloyal, nor merely callous,” said an imaginary editorial in *The Spectator*, “to suggest that if Mrs Simpson's unlooked-for passing has not saved a nation from disaster, then it has...saved His Majesty from himself.”

In an England where the abdication of 1936 was fortuitously averted by the death of the American divorcée, the declaration of war against Germany on September 3, 1939, saw Edward VIII still on the throne. The king isn't too enthusiastic about a war to protect a distant Poland. To him, as with many Britons of his class, the real enemy is Bolshevism. Yet, the king is a constitutional monarch and must do what the government tells him to do. There is precious little scope for the monarch to speak his mind publicly.

In Taylor's story, the king detects a small window of opportunity: his traditional live Christmas broadcast to the Empire. With the aid of a dandyish journalist, Beverly Nichols (who in real life wrote an astonishingly controversial repudiation of the Indian nation in *Verdict on India*), the king plots to deviate from the script that had been vetted by his Palace minders and Whitehall. As the live broadcast from Windsor proceeds, Edward Windsor slyly inserts a paragraph into his speech: “This, we are told, is a war to defend the interests of those who cannot defend themselves. But might not those interests be better defended by war's cessation?” The monarch says that he can't answer these questions. “They are for governments, for the democratically elected representatives...to consider. But I put it to you that they should be considered, that the duties which lie before us may not be as straightforward as they seem to be...”

For history buffs, Taylor accurately anticipates the consequences had Edward VIII actually made such a Christmas broadcast. He crafts an imaginary *Daily Telegraph* editorial that confronts the issues with characteristic tact and circumspection. Did the king exceed his constitutional brief? No, because “the King's Speech is one of the few occasions on which the Sovereign is permitted — in fact encouraged — to

express a personal opinion.” But, should the king have said what he did? “The gap between what a man may say in private and what may decently be uttered on a public platform is known...In supposing such a gap not to exist, the King has not only — albeit inadvertently — offered comfort to our enemies.”

The invocation of an imaginary royal indiscretion by a monarch who in real life put emotion above the call of duty may appear a self-indulgent diversion. But the controversies that arise as a result of a ceremonial head of state deviating from both homilies and anodyne comments are real. Indeed, in the context of President Pranab Mukherjee’s first Republic Day address to the nation, it assumes a contemporary relevance.

To begin with, there is the vexed question as to whether the Republic Day address — as opposed to the speech he delivers at the opening of Parliament — is the president’s own or reflect the views of the government. The Constitution deems that the head of state is guided by the advice of his council of ministers. In practice, this does not imply that the president is entirely a rubber stamp, deprived entirely of his right of independent observation. By convention, a draft of the president’s speech on a national day is sent to the cabinet secretary. Yet, there is no known case of a government modifying the draft. As with the British monarch’s Christmas Day broadcast, the president speaks his mind with the necessary dose of circumspection and understatement. This is all the more relevant in the context of President Mukherjee. Along with Rajendra Prasad and R.Venkataraman, he is the only person who came to Rashtrapati Bhavan after having occupied the most important political posts. There have been other politicians who became president, but their experience of public life was nowhere as significant as that of the present incumbent. What President Mukherjee thinks bears the hallmark of both experience and erudition.

This Republic Day, some eyebrows were raised by two of the president’s more political observations. First, he suggested that “elections do not give any person the licence to flirt with illusions. Those who seek the trust of voters must promise only what is possible. Government is not a charity shop. Populist governance cannot be a substitute for governance.” Quite predictably, and given the shenanigans of Arvind Kejriwal on the streets of Delhi just three days before, the warning against reckless populism was seen as an indictment of the Aam Aadmi Party. It was certainly viewed as such by the AAP leadership and by its supporters.

Secondly, the president spoke about the yearning of Young India for opportunities and a better life. However, he argued that “this chance will not come if India does not get a stable government...A fractured government hostage to whimsical opportunists, is always an unhappy eventuality. In 2014, it could be catastrophic. Each one of us is a voter; each one of us has a deep responsibility.”

This grave warning of the implications of a weak government was well-intentioned. Yet, coming as it did in the backdrop of opinion polls suggesting that the Narendra-Modi-led National Democratic Alliance had clearly outpaced its Congress opponents, there were

whispers that the president was arguing that the duty of the citizen lay in bolstering the front-runner and giving it an unequivocal mandate. In another context, it may have been read as an encouragement to the Congress but with anti-incumbency sweeping the country, the president's message must have been music to the ears of the Modi camp.

Till a year ago, President Mukherjee was an over-active politician, well respected on all sides of the political divide. It is against his nature to fall back on meaningless platitudes and homilies. He wants to remain relevant, not perhaps in an intrusive way but as a wise elder statesman. His remarks were not calculated to offend but to counsel all those who have a stake in the future of India. Most important, the sentiments he expressed found a positive echo in much of India. At the same time, his observations were jarring to those who imagine that they have given direct democracy a new meaning and those who believe that the only meaningful objective of the coming election is to stop Modi at all cost.

National consensus can only be achieved in a united country. At Christmas, 1939, Britain was confronted by an existential dilemma: to fight or to maintain an Empire and a way of life. In 2014, India is troubled by indecision over whether to look back or move forward. The uncertainty imposes an additional obligation on the head of state to speak his mind, albeit in code.

RAILWAYS

HINDU, JAN 31, 2014

Railways to roll out next gen e-ticketing in April

S. ANANDAN

There seems to be light at the end of the tunnel for millions of train passengers who have a hard time booking tickets on www.irctc.co.in.

The Indian Railways, says a top official, is gearing up to roll out next-generation e-ticketing from April this year, marking a 'paradigm shift' in technology, customer-friendliness and speed.

“While traffic on IRCTC has grown 10 times over the years, the system capacities have also undergone upgrades. But there has never been a paradigm shift, as we were only tweaking and augmenting the systems and technologies introduced in 2002. We are now investing about Rs.100 crore to launch next generation e-ticketing. It will, however, take a few months for the new system to stabilise, given its enormity,” Rakesh Tandon, additional member (IT) of the Ministry of Railways, told *The Hindu* on the sidelines of a conference here on Thursday.

Mr. Tandon said currently e-transactions to the tune of Rs. 50 crore took place on the IRCTC. While almost every technology company worth its salt was involved in the humungous project, it would still require a teething time of at least six months, as “not even big corporations have handled such a large system.”

RIOTS

HINDUSTAN TIMES, JAN 30, 2014

Delhi Govt. decides to form SIT to look into 1984 riots

The Aam Aadmi Party Government in Delhi on Wednesday announced its intentions to form a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the 1984 anti-Sikh riots. Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal also met Lieutenant-Governor Najeeb Jung to submit his request demanding such a probe.

“I discussed the matter with the Lt-Governor. He was positive about it. As far as constitution of an SIT and fixing the terms of reference are concerned, we will decide that at the next Cabinet meeting,” Mr. Kejriwal told reporters here.

The decision to set up SIT comes three days after Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi admitted in an interview to a TV channel that some of his party workers were “probably” involved in the riots. The demand for a SIT probe had also been made by the Delhi Sikh Gurdwara Management Committee.

Urban Development Minister Manish Sisodia told reporters that the decision was in keeping with the promise that the AAP made in its election manifesto to “provide justice to the victims of the 1984 riots and re-open wrongly closed cases”. He also said the proposal for the SIT will be placed before the Delhi Cabinet and the modalities will be set.

“The AAP made a commitment in its election manifesto that it will work towards bringing justice to the victims of the 1984 riots. The government has decided ‘in principle’ and we have also discussed this with the L-G,” said Mr. Sisodia.

The Shiromani Akali Dal also demanded a SIT with its Delhi president Manjit Singh G.K., who also heads the DSGMC, demanding “re-opening of cases of killing of innocent Sikhs which were closed without investigation and also registration of fresh FIRs, which were never entertained by the police of Delhi and other States despite pleas by the riot victims”.

“Remarks by Congress vice-president Rahul Gandhi that some Congressmen were probably involved in the 1984 have caused a lot of discomfort and pain among the Sikh community,” said Mr. Singh. He also referred to the Nanavati Commission Report of 2005 which said that a total of 587 riot-related FIRs were registered in Delhi and of these 241 were closed by the police as untraced and never sent to court for trial.

WOMEN

INDIAN EXPRESS, JAN 30, 2014

Govt approves special security force to ensure women's safety

The Delhi Cabinet on Tuesday approved the setting up of Mahila Suraksha Dal, a commando force that will be responsible for ensuring the safety of women in the capital. Setting up a special security force for women was one of the election promises made by the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which had, in the run-up to the Assembly elections, accused the previous Congress government of not doing enough to ensure the safety of women in the city.

Urban Development Minister Manish Sisodia said a high-level committee headed by the chief secretary had been formed to recommend ways for constituting Mahila Suraksha Dals across the city.

The committee will comprise of the principal secretary (home), Director-General (Home Guards) and director of women and child development as its members, to start with. The committee will submit its report by February 15.

The committee has been asked to work out the modalities for recruitment of retired army personnel and other servicemen, who will assist Home Guards in the Mahila Suraksha Dals.

The women security force will not have police powers. The government will bear the financial burden of constituting the force.

The terms of reference for the committee include examining the existing number of courts in the city and to recommend how many new courts will be required to function as special fast-track courts to try criminal cases involving heinous crimes against women.

Another proposal passed by the Cabinet was the setting up of a high-level committee headed by the chief secretary to resolve the issue of temporary, contractual and casual employees in all departments, offices and autonomous bodies.

The committee will submit its report within a month. It will have 12 members, including Prakash Chander (a retired IAS officer), M M Kutty (Finance Secretary), A S Yadav (Law Secretary), Arun Baroka, Principal Secretary (PWD), and Piyush Sharma (Additional Commissioner, Labour).

The committee will examine the number of employees without permanent jobs, posts vacant, status of recruitment processes and the legal, technical and financial aspects of giving preference to existing employees. “We will go by procedure in making contractual workers permanent and we cannot bypass that process...,” Sisodia said.