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AWARDS

ASIAN AGE, JUN 08, 2015

Bangladesh award for Atal Behari Vajpayee for 1971 war

Manash Pratim Bhuyan

Narendra Modi receives the Award of Liberation war honour on behalf of former PM Atal Behari Vajpayee Mohammad Abdul Hamid. -AFP

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday received on behalf of Atal Behari Vajpayee Bangladesh's prestigious Liberation War Honour for his "active role" in the country's freedom struggle, saying the BJP veteran was an "inspiration" to him and other political workers.

President Abdul Hamid handed over the Bangladesh Liberation War Honour to Mr Modi at a glittering ceremony at Bangabhaban, the President's house, as 90-year-old Vajpayee is ailing and unable to travel. The function was attended by Premier Sheikh Hasina, her Cabinet colleagues, eminent citizens, diplomats and top Bangladeshi officials.

Mr Modi, while receiving the honour, hailed Mr Vajpayee's leadership, saying the "great leader" was a source of inspiration for political workers including him.

"This day is a matter of great pride for all Indians that a great leader like Atal Behari Vajpayee is being honoured. He dedicated his entire life to the service of the country and he fought for the rights of the common man and from a political point of view he was an inspiration for political workers like myself," Mr Modi said after receiving the award.

Recalling Mr Vajpayee's support to Bangladesh's freedom struggle, Mr Modi said Bharatiya Jana Sangh, under Mr Vajpayee's leadership had organised a Satyagraha supporting the Liberation War and as a "young volunteer" he had come from his village to attend it.

The Prime Minister said as a young volunteer, he along with every Indian, wanted the dream of Bangladeshi people to come true.

"When you fought a battle of pride, I was also among the Indians who whole-heartedly wanted your dream to come true," Mr Modi said to a thunderous applause.

"When muktijodhas (freedom fighters) of Bangladesh were shedding blood, Indians too were fighting side-by-side to help people of Bangladesh realise their dream," he said.

Mr Modi said even though Mr Vajpayee was in Opposition, he was able to "offer a direction" to India on the issue of Bangladesh's freedom struggle.

"This is being remembered here today for which I express my gratitude. If Atalji's health permitted and he was present here, this occasion would be very different," he said.

Mr Modi also quoted from Mr Vajpayee's speech in Parliament on December 6, 1971.

"Today for Bangladesh's freedom, the liberation fighters and Indian jawans are fighting side-by-side by shedding their blood. This blood will give rise to such a relationship which will not break under any pressure," Mr Modi quoted Vajpayee as saying.

MR Modi said the thoughts of MR Vajpayee must be taken forward to the new generations so that relationship between the two countries becomes "unbreakable" and both the neighbours realise their dreams together.

The citation of the Liberation War Honour award hailed Mr Vajpayee as a "highly respected political leader" and recognised his "active role" in support of the Liberation War of Bangladesh.

It said as President of Bharatiya Jana Sangh and a member of the Lok Sabha Vajpayee took various steps towards that end.

"In an editorial column of the 'Organiser', Vajpayee welcomed Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rehman's historic declaration of Bangladesh's independence and called upon the government of India to recognise the government of Bangladesh and provide necessary assistance to the freedom fighters," the citation said.

It also recognised Bharatiya Jana Sangh's role in pressing the demand for Indian government's "expedited support" to the Liberation War. Speaking on the occasion, Bangladesh President Hamid said despite being in the opposition, Vajpayee had the political pragmatism to lend his strong support to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi for the cause of Bangladesh.

BACKWARD CLASSES

DECCAN HERALD, JUN 08, 2015

Creamy layer cap may be Rs 8 lakh

Ajith Athrady

The Centre is likely to raise the creamy layer ceiling for the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) from the present annual salary of Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh.

If the government goes ahead with this proposal, families earning over Rs 8 lakh will not be eligible to seek OBC reservation benefits in government jobs and admissions in institutes of higher education. The government has reserved 27 per cent seats for the OBCs.

Increasing annual salary bar from existing Rs 6 lakh to Rs 8 lakh would bring more backward class aspirants under the reservation net and increase competition in jobs and admission to educational institutions like IITs and IIMs.

Recently, the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC) had recommended the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to increase the creamy layer ceiling for OBCs from the existing annual salary of Rs 6 lakh to Rs 10.50 lakh.

The creamy layer bars the affluent among the OBCs from reservation benefit on the basis of family income.

Though the commission suggestion is not binding on the government for implementation, sources in the Ministry of Social Justice told Deccan Herald that it is studying it and trying to maintain balance. Instead of Rs 10.50 lakh as recommended by the commission, the government is thinking on limiting it to Rs 8 lakh per annum, the sources said.

Taking into note the poor representation of backward classes in the central government jobs, the NCBC also recommended in its report that qualifying standards will be relaxed for the OBCs to fill the 27 per cent seats.

A senior official in the commission said despite reservations, most of the seats for the OBCs in premier educational institutions such as IITs and IIMs have remained vacant and also in government jobs.

BLACK MONEY

HINDU, JUN 08, 2015

Black money: pinning the shadow down

SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY

The steps taken so far, and this includes the Black Money Bill, to bring back an estimated \$1.5 trillion stashed abroad are completely ineffective. There are better and stronger solutions available

Recently, on the suggestion of the eminent lawyer, Ram Jethmalani, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court allowed me to lead arguments on the effective steps to be taken to bring back black money, or undisclosed illegally held funds, estimated at Rs.120 lakh crore, stashed secretly abroad by Indians in numbered bank accounts. This amount is about 60 times the annual revenue from income tax in the Union Budget.

The media had reported during the 2014 Lok Sabha election, possibly with the usual dose of interpolation and dramatisation, that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had pledged in election speeches to bring back to the country all this black money. According to these reports, Mr. Modi had said the money belonged to the nation, and every citizen would receive Rs.15 lakh in his or her bank account when the money came in.

When or where Mr. Modi said this is not clear, but the nation, convinced after his speech that this would be done, now holds the government led by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) responsible for having failed to keep this promise.

It is a fact that despite the Modi government setting up, soon after coming to office, a Special Investigation Team under two former Supreme Court judges, there is no sign yet of black money having being brought back.

Does this mean that the BJP had underestimated the reality and complexity of the issue and that there are no quick fixes for retrieving the black money back? To understand this, it is important to recognise why eliminating black money is crucial to the nation's strategy for high growth.

The black money issue should not be misunderstood as one of merely avoiding taxes. It is, in fact, a major systemic crime of denying the nation's financial system the proceeds of wealth. Such denial should actually be declared as treason, where opportunities to share the wealth for the benefit of the poor are wilfully denied.

The spreading cancer

Black money is a cancer in our economic system, not yet terminal or life-threatening. But we do not have much time left, possibly only a decade, before the economic system starts to unravel and contort.

There are three dimensions to this cancer. First, there is a distortion of investment priorities because acquiring luxuries with black money favours high-level investment in the luxury goods industries — there is a higher rate of return on investment. This is similar to the cellular disorder in the body of a cancer patient.

Second, forward trading in agricultural commodities by cash-rich speculators causes fluctuations in prices due to hoarding of agricultural products.

Third, generating black money with impunity means that the quality is sub-optimised in public sector infrastructural projects by tender manipulation, under- and over-invoicing in trade, and so on. The so-called Black Money Bill of 2015, passed recently by Parliament, is inadequate to secure the return of an estimated \$1.5 trillion deposited illegally abroad by Indian citizens in about 90 countries.

The statute is structured in a way that will ensure punishment for black money hoarders once the money is detected or admitted for amnesty, but has no provisions on how to bring back the money itself.

Taking the right steps

There are four ways by which the names and accounts that are illegally held abroad can be ascertained, and the money stashed away brought back.

First, the Central Bureau of Investigation/Enforcement Directorate can register a First Information Report on the receipt of information of illegal accounts through Intelligence sources, and then obtain a Letter of Request u/s 166A of the Criminal Procedure Code (1973) from a designated court. Then, the agency can use Switzerland's Law On International Judicial Assistance in Criminal Matters and seek Swiss cooperation to confiscate the account.

The second way is the German or French method of obtaining records of a particular bank. Monetary inducements are used in these two countries to will senior bank officials, as was done with the Bank of Liechtenstein and HSBC in Geneva.

The third way, the U.S. method, was used in the Washington D.C.-based branch offices of the Union Bank of Switzerland and Credit Suisse. Senior bank officers based in the Washington D.C. branch were arrested on charges of espionage to pressurise Swiss authorities into giving over 5,000 names of U.S. citizens who had illegally opened bank

accounts in these two banks that had claimed secrecy as a business principle. India also has Swiss bank branch offices in Mumbai.

The fourth is the method suggested by eminent jurist and senior advocate Fali S. Nariman in his Rajya Sabha speeches and opinion pieces in newspapers, namely, invoking the Resolution of the UN Convention against Corruption, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2005 and ratified by India in 2011.

This requires Parliament to pass a law. Or, as a first step, it requires the President to issue an Ordinance to nationalise all the bank accounts of Indian citizens in the 90-odd nations where black money is stashed. Thereafter, bilateral discussions with each of these countries can take place to get hold of the accounts.

Moreover, SIT must seek a report from the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) of the Indian government on what it has done about suspicious transactions reported by banks. This will ensure that the banks report, on a real time basis, all suspicious transactions. SIT should demand both an investigation into at least 100 of the major suspicious transactions that have been reported in the past three years, and action to be taken against them within 10 days. There must also be a follow up on all other cases, as and when reports surface.

Issue of ownership

There is also no precise definition of politically empowered persons. It is defined as per the UN Convention against Corruption 2005, which India ratified and became a signatory to in 2011. Further, in line with the provisions of Section 12 of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act, all institutions must declare to the government their beneficial ownership — this will include ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, Jet Airways, and so on. Unless this is done, the ownership of several large corporations will remain unknown.

Mr. Nariman's suggestion, the first of its kind, should become a crucial instrument of black money restitution, mandated by the Supreme Court.

These are the effective ways of obtaining the estimated \$1.50 trillion stashed abroad. The measures being taken presently by the government are completely ineffective in tackling this cancer and are, therefore, only of diversionary value.

(Subramanian Swamy is a former Union Cabinet Minister of Commerce, Law and Justice, and Chairman of the Action Committee Against Corruption in India.)

The black money issue should not be misunderstood as one of merely avoiding taxes. It is a major systemic crime of denying the nation's financial system the proceeds of wealth. Such denial should actually be declared as treason

CIVIL SERVICE

HINDU, JUN 12, 2015

One officer “two” many in Delhi Govt.

ATUL MATHUR

An interesting battle played out in the Capital on Thursday with two Home Secretaries functioning from the Secretariat and two IPS officers discharging their duties as the Anti-Corruption Branch chief. The confusion over who is the actual designated official continued for the third consecutive day even as the Arvind Kejriwal government and the Ministry of Home Affairs remained locked in a tussle over supremacy, reminding each other of the constitutional provisions over their respective administrative jurisdiction.

Senior IAS officer Dharam Pal, who was removed as Home Secretary by the AAP government on Tuesday and repatriated to the Centre, operated from his Delhi Secretariat office after the MHA revoked the Delhi government's order terming it invalid and asserted that powers to transfer AGMUT-cadre officers rested with the Centre. Chief Minister's Principal Secretary Rajendra Kumar, who was given additional charge of the Home Department by the Delhi government, also continued to operate out of his office in the Secretariat.

Following a directive from the Union Home Ministry, Chief Secretary K.K. Sharma on Thursday issued orders to Mr. Kumar “not to create any hindrance for Dharam Pal in discharging his duties as the Home Secretary”. However, sources said, files pertaining to the Home Department continued to be routed through Mr. Kumar instead of Mr. Pal.

Not very far from the Delhi government headquarters at Players' Building, two senior IPS officers -- Mukesh Kumar Meena and S. S. Yadav -- worked as the top boss of the ACB. Mr. Meena, who was appointed by Lieutenant-Governor Najeeb Jung, continued to function from an office on Parliament Street, while Mr. Yadav, who was brought by the AAP government to head the anti-graft body in April, operated from the Branch's headquarters near Civil Lines.

According to an ACB source, Mr. Meena is visiting the Civil Lines office “at least once a day” to seek details about its administrative functioning “as per the mandate handed to him by the MHA through the L-G House”.

DECCAN HERALD, JUN 12, 2015

Centre annuls Delhi govt decision to repatriate babu

The Delhi government on Thursday bowed to the Centre in its latest confrontation on the issue of control of bureaucrats after the Home Ministry annulled its decision to repatriate Principal Secretary (Home) Dharam Pal.

The Delhi government had on Tuesday relieved Pal and put him at the disposal of the

Home Ministry, while giving his assignments to IAS officers Rajender Kumar (Home) and Ashwani Kumar (Land).

The Home Ministry, however, on Wednesday termed the order illegal, forcing Chief Secretary K K Sharma on Thursday to ensure that Pal “continues to function as principal secretary (home) and principal secretary (land and building) without any disruption.”

The Home Ministry reversed the Delhi government order within 48 hours it divested Pal of his duties. The Arvind Kejriwal-led government is in a confrontation mode with the Centre and Lt Governor Najeeb Jung over control of bureaucrats in Delhi administration.

With Jung issuing an order that Pal’s removal does not have his assent, the Delhi Secretariat witnessed a peculiar situation as both officers – Pal and Kumar – functioned as principal secretary (Home).

Sticking to his stand on his right to assign work to bureaucrats, Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has written to the Union Home Ministry that he would not tolerate any interference in matters which are in his domain under the statute.

In a strongly worded letter on Thursday, Kejriwal reminded the central government that as the chief minister, the Government of National Capital Territory Act gave him the power to distribute work to bureaucrats.

BUSINESS STANDARD, JUN 12, 2015

Another LG-Delhi Govt tussle now over Home Secretary

Today's MHA directive declaring the Delhi government order "ab initio void", backed the L-G's decision

The Union home ministry on Thursday rejected the [Delhi](#) government’s order removing Dharam Pal as principal secretary (home) and repatriating him to the Centre.

It repeated its view that powers to transfer officials of the Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Mizoram and Union Territory cadre lay solely with the Centre. Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal wrote to the ministry within hours, stating the state government was within its powers to offer “additional or temporary charge” to senior officials and the Centre should not interfere.

Principal Secretary (Home) Dharam Pal was caught in the cross fire after he had acted on [LG](#) Najeeb Jung's orders and appointed MK Meena, Joint Commissioner of Delhi

Police as new chief of Anti-Corruption Branch, much to the annoyance of the Kejriwal led Delhi government. Subsequently he was removed and Principal Secretary of Services Department Rajendra Kumar was given additional charge. However, Lt Governor Najeeb Jung rejected Dharam Pal's repatriation and asked him to continue.

Today's [MHA](#) directive declaring the Delhi government order "ab initio void", backed the L-G's decision.

In its detailed order the MHA stated, "The DoPT under the All India Service (Joint Cadre) rules, 1972, have constituted a Joint Cadre Authority headed by Union [Home Secretary](#) for transfer of officers of AGMUT cadre among the nine constituents under rule 5 AIS (JCA, 1972). Therefore the only competent authority for transfer of officers of AGMUT cadre from one constituent to the other is the JCA." The Joint Cadre Authority JCA includes chief secretaries of Delhi, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Goa while Union Home Secretary heads it.

Delhi Chief Secretary KK Sharma then acting on the fresh orders cancelled Dharam Pal's repatriation to the Centre.

Chief minister Kejriwal then fired back and in a letter to the Union Home Ministry said as per provisions of the Constitution and GNCT Delhi Act, the city government was well within its right to give "additional or temporary charge" to senior officials. The CM asserted he was within his rights to surrender Dharam Pal back to the Home Ministry." He insisted that Rajender Kumar had only been given given additional charge till a new home secretary is picked. Thereby signalling another round of administrative blows between the Lt Governor through the L-G and the Centre.

[ECONOMIC TIMES, JUN 09, 2015](#)

Delhi government shunts out Home Secretary Dharam Pal

LG Najeeb Jung had yesterday appointed Meena superseding Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's hand-picked chief SS Yadav. The AAP government had reacted sharply to the decision.

NEW DELHI: In escalation of tension, [AAP government](#) today transferred Home Secretary [Dharam Pal](#), hours after he signed a notification appointing Joint Commissioner

of Delhi Police M K Meena as new Chief of Anti-Corruption Branch (ACB) following order from Lt Governor [Najeeb Jung](#).

Sources in Delhi Government said Pal has been transferred and the order to this effect has been sent to the LG for approval.

Jung had yesterday appointed Meena superseding Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's hand-picked chief SS Yadav. The AAP government had reacted sharply to the decision.

Earlier, an Additional Commissioner-level officer used to head ACB but the LG yesterday had elevated the rank of head of the probe agency from Additional Commissioner to Joint Commissioner.

Meena is currently serving as Joint Commissioner of New Delhi range and the LG's order said he has been given additional charge of ACB.

Today, the AAP government refused to allow Meena to take charge. The official, however, said he will comply with the LG's order.

DECCAN HERALD, JUN 10, 2015

Wrong prosecution sanction order results in discharge of IAS officer in DA case
Ambarish B,

A wrong Prosecution Sanction Order (PSO) by the State government has resulted in discharge of an IAS officer (now retired) in a disproportionate assets case.

The Lokayukta special court (Bengaluru Rural) on Tuesday discharged former IAS officer V Chandrashekar on the grounds that once sanction is rejected, chargesheet cannot be filed after the retirement of the accused government servant.

V Chandrashekar was raided by the Lokayukta police in 2007 when he was waiting for a posting as Deputy Commissioner, Bagalkot. After the investigation, the Lokayukta police found 47.1 percent disproportionate assets in the case and sent the request seeking PSO. Instead of forwarding the PSO request to Union government at Department of Personnel and Training, a high-level committee was constituted to look into the PSO request of an All India Service officer. The committee also sought the reply from the accused government officer and rejected the PSO stating that the calculation of DA doesn't cross more than 15 percent.

“The then Lokayukta Justice N Santosh Hegde wrote strongly worded letter to the chief secretary saying the government had no authority to deliberate on a final report sent for their perusal. The then chief secretary realised the faulty process and wrote back to the then ADGP Lokayukta police stating the letter rejecting the PSO has been withdrawn. A

fresh letter seeking PSO from the Union government was sent to the government in 2013,” an official said.

According to Lokayukta police, V Chandrashekar filed a write petition seeking quashing of proceedings against him. The High Court after looking into the chief secretary’s letter withdrawing earlier rejection of sanction, directed the police to submit the final report after receiving the communication on PSO from the Centre. In September 2013, Chandrashekar retired from service and the chief secretary wrote to the ADGP Lokayukta in March 2014 stating since the officer has retired, no need of PSO to file the chargesheet. The Lokayukta police filed the chargesheet in March 2014 against V Chandrashekar.

The counsel appearing for Chandrashekar contended that since the ‘confidential’ letter from the State government in 2012 rejected PSO, the chargesheet cannot be filed after the retirement of the official. The prosecutor appearing for Lokayukta police stated that in the present case the State government wrongly passed an order rejecting sanction. The Lokayukta special court, however, allowed the contention placed by Chandrashekar and discharged.

Sources in the Lokayukta police said that a decision will be taken soon on filing an appeal in the case. “The court has relied upon two grounds, one in the event of rejection of PSO, chargesheet cannot be filed after the retirement of the official and also that no fresh application seeking PSO can be filed unless there is additional material in the report. We are taking legal opinion on the order and soon take a decision on filing an appeal in the case,” an official said.

[HINDUSTAN TIMES, JUN 08, 2015](#)

Centre faces acute shortage of mid-level civil servants

Brajesh Kumar

The Narendra Modi-led government at the Centre is facing shortage of officers at the level of directors/deputy secretaries, the backbone of the bureaucracy, with 88 such positions lying vacant in different ministries and departments.

And as against these many vacancies, the number of officers (on the offer list) on the department of personnel and training (DoPT) website shows 24 names, out of which only 10 want to be posted to Delhi.

While there is no comparative figure for the offer list, officers say at any given time, a few years ago, this list had 100 to 150 names.

The offer list is prepared after officers from different services (mostly Group A services) express their willingness to come to Centre on deputation.

“The number of vacancy at this level show officers are unwilling to leave their parent cadre for a Delhi posting,” a director in a central ministry said. The reasons for this he said are varied — from lack of office support staff to long wait for accommodation to non-allotment of official vehicles.

“While in our parent cadre we are given accommodation, an official vehicle and adequate support staff, here in Delhi getting a government accommodation is a tough task, an official vehicle an impossibility, and support staff a rarity,” another officer from the Indian Telecom Service on deputation to a central ministry said.

For IAS and IPS officers leaving their state cadres and coming to centre on deputation is far less attractive.

For Group A service officers another reason for not opting for a Delhi posting is loss of pay in switching from parent cadre to Centre. If they choose to join as DS/director, they will be given the pay scale of DS/director even if they have been promoted in their own cadre and are receiving more salary.

The government however has taken cognizance of the shortage and promised more facilities for officers at this level.

Dr Jitendra Singh, minister of state for personnel, public grievance and pension recently said the DoPT is contemplating provision of comfortable transport and housing facility for officers at these positions on deputation to the Centre.

[TRIBUNE, JUN 09, 2015](#)

Pranab appoints new CVC, CIC

Former Central Board of Direct Taxation chief KV Chowdary was today named the new Chief Vigilance Commissioner (CVC) while senior-most Information Commissioner Vijai Sharma was appointed Chief Information Commissioner (CIC).

Chowdary (Indian Revenue Service, 1978) is a retired Central Board of Direct Taxes chairman while Sharma (Indian Administrative Service, 1974), is an Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission, official

announcements made here said. TM Bhasin, Chairman and Managing Director, Indian Bank, has been appointed Vigilance Commissioner in the Chief Vigilance Commission and Sudhir Bhargava (IAS, 1979), retired Secretary, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, has been named Information Commissioner in the Central Information Commission, the announcements said.

While the appointments in the Central Vigilance Commission have been made for a term of four years or till they attain the age of 65 years, the appointments in the Central Information Commission have been made for a term of five years or till they attain the age of 65 years. The names were cleared in the meetings that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had with leader of largest opposition party in Lok Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge earlier last week and had been sent for clearance to President Pranab Mukherjee. The posts were lying vacant for over nine months and there has been a strong criticism, especially from the Opposition parties, over the issue with Congress president Sonia Gandhi and party vice-president Rahul Gandhi leading the charge and questioning the delay in the appointments by the Narendra Modi government.

The post of CVC had been lying vacant since Pradeep Kumar retired on September 28 last year, while the post of vigilance commissioner was also unfilled since incumbent JM Garg completed his tenure on September 7 last year. Chowdary has also headed many high-profile income tax probes, including that of the 2G spectrum allocation case and the HSBC Geneva taxpayers' list.

There were 203 applicants for the post of the Chief Information Commissioner and 553 for the post of Information Commissioners at the transparency panel. For the post of CIC, all the seven existing Information Commissioners had applied.

HINDU, JUN 08, 2015

Kejriwal asks staff to 'move on'

Instead, AAP Government reminds its employees of the "time-bound delivery of services" with regard to its 70-point charter

In a written communication, the Delhi Government has asked its employees to "move on" from the negativity triggered by its recent showdown with the bureaucracy. According to a source, the government has reminded its employees of the deadlines agreed upon for the delivery of major promises. The said communication reiterates the need for "time-bound delivery of services" with regard to the AAP Government's 70-point charter.

It does, however, acknowledge the delay that these might now be up against given the disruption in work due to the stand-off between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's office and Lieutenant-Governor Najeeb Jung.

These deadlines, the source added, had broadly been fixed as per the presentations made by various government departments with regard to various projects in the respective pipeline and must now, according to the communication, be honoured.

“The government is aware of the atmosphere of insecurity prevailing at various strata of the bureaucracy due to its confrontation with the Lieutenant-Governor’s office,” said an official.

“While the communication seeks to remind the bureaucracy that they must deliver, it also seeks to re-instill confidence and faith in the Chief Minister and his office,” the official added.

The Kejriwal-led Government had first attempted to reach out to the bureaucracy at its ‘Janta ki Durbar’ where it sought to inform residents of the Capital about its achievements in the first 100 days of coming to power.

Ever since Arvind Kejriwal launched a frontal attack on the Centre over division of powers for the Capital’s administration, the reactions of Lieutenant Governor Najeeb Jung have been watched with interest. Political observers believe that Mr. Jung has been patient and forbearing.

The last straw in the battle of wits came when Mr. Kejriwal termed Mr. Jung a polling agent of the BJP. Mr. Jung, true to his image, reacted with calmness and cited a Biblical saying about the spirit of forgiveness, which has been perceived as a befitting response.

Despite Mr. Kejriwal’s outbursts, Delhi’s governance structure has not changed. All files are being routed through the L-G for his perusal, even as the matter of division of constitutional powers between the top two functionaries remains with the courts. After the Delhi Assembly passed a “Sense of the House” resolution against the Centre’s May 21 notification, business continues as usual in the Capital.

Emotions were running high last week at the meeting of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation. The special session was called to discuss the ongoing financial crisis that has forced the civic body to default on commitments. As the BJP-ruled House attacked the AAP Government and the Congress councillors hit out against the Centre, several BJP councillors spoke of old women visiting their offices to ask about the Rs.1,000 monthly pension. Some had tears in their eyes, while others were in urgent need of medical care.

While councillor Renu Gupta said she gave one old woman money for medicines, Parvesh Wahi said an old woman in torn clothes had come to his office. Former Mayor Rajni Abbi said she was visited by an old woman who had no money to perform the last rites for her son. All these stories, meant to stir the emotional hardships faced by pensioners, led Congress councillor Parma Bhai Solanki to remark: “How interesting that old women went around to only BJP councillors’ offices. I can’t pretend to have met one, but I feel for them.”

In a case of one of the highest-ever compensations demanded for negligence by government authorities, a daily wage earner has dragged the North Delhi Municipal Corporation, Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation and others to court over the death of his 9-year old son who fell into an uncovered pit of an underground water reservoir in a park in Badli industrial area on April 30.

Nawal Kishore Shah has demanded a compensation of Rs.1 crore and sought action against the erring officials. When the police were approached, they did not take any immediate action and simply registered an FIR about the boy being kidnapped. Justice Rajiv Shakhder of the High Court has now sought a response from the authorities by September 29.

By Mohammed Iqbal, Damini Nath and Jatin Anand

ECONOMIC TIMES, JUN 12, 2015 12, 2015

Major bureaucratic reshuffle in AAP-led Delhi government

Chetan B Sanghi, a 1988 batch officer, is the new principal secretary of Industries Department. However, Gamlin will continue as Principal Secretary (Power).

NEW DELHI: The AAP government today effected a major bureaucratic reshuffle involving as many as 25 senior officials, amid its bitter confrontation with Lt Governor Najeeb Jung on their appointments and transfers.

The government divested Shakuntala Gamlin from the post of [Principal Secretary](#) (Industries), weeks after her appointment by Lt Governor as Delhi's acting chief secretary had triggered a major showdown between Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal and Jung.

Chetan B Sanghi, a 1988 batch officer, is the new principal secretary of Industries Department. However, Gamlin will continue as Principal Secretary (Power).

Sanghi is also likely to head Urban Development and [Public Works Department](#) (PWD).

Delhi Tourism and Transportation Development Corporation's Managing Director Ramesh Tiwari has been appointed as the special secretary of the NCR Board, and Z U Siddiqui, who was awaiting posting, has been given the charge of DTTDC MD.

"Special Secretary (health and family welfare) F O Hashmi has been given additional charge of the Managing Director of the Shahjahanabad Redevelopment Corporation.

"While R R [Mishra](#) has been appointed as the [special commissioner](#) of trade and taxes, [Delhi Jal Board](#) director C R Garg has been appointed as managing director of DTC among others," the government said in its order.

HINDU, JUN 08, 2015

Standoff spells relief for officers

JATIN ANAND

MHA-Govt face-off leads to status quo on transfer postings

The standoff between the Delhi Government and the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) over the issue of transfer postings might have generated negative headlines over the last month, but couldn't have come at a more opportune time for some in the Capital's bureaucratic circles. Close to a dozen Indian Police Service (IPS) officers posted across the echelons of the police, a decision pertaining to whose transfers out of Delhi was supposed to be taken at a recent meeting which was cancelled, can now continue with their current job assignments.

"There are close to half a dozen IPS officers across the ranks of joint commissioners and special commissioners of police already transferred in April or in line for a transfer. Their postings have been delayed after a meeting of the Joint Cadre Authority of the All India service or the AGMU cadre got cancelled last week," said a source.

"Not only was this a setback for the police, which has been sitting on a cadre review expected to make significant structural changes to its hierarchy for over a year, its ramifications will extend to other police forces under the jurisdiction of the AGMU cadre," the source said. According to the source, the said meeting, which was scheduled to be held at the MHA on June 4, was 'officially cancelled' due to the absence of the Chief Secretaries of two union territories (UTs) who were supposed to be in attendance. Status quo must now be maintained till the next such meeting.

The 'actual reason' for the cancellation of the meeting, however, was the unavailability of senior MHA officials, who were engaged in lengthy consultations on the issue of 'making the Delhi Government fall in line', 'ways of empowering the MHA's writ in the Capital through the Lieutenant-Governor', and preparing 'an effective legal defence against the Delhi Government'.

The last such meeting, chaired by the Joint Secretary (UTs) had been held in early April. No specified date has been cited for another meeting to look into the issue yet.

“While many bureaucrats do not want to leave the Capital despite having occupied their respective postings in Delhi above the specified time limit that ranges between two and three years, their replacements have been relieved from their posts and are currently hanging in the middle. Many of them have been stuck in limbo for at least two months,” said an official.

Close to a dozen IPS officers whose transfers out of Delhi was supposed to be taken at a meeting that was cancelled, can now continue

CORRUPTION

ECONOMIC TIMES, JUN 109, 2015

AAP government refuses to allow M K Meena to take charge as Anti-Corruption Branch chief

AAP government today refused to allow Joint Commissioner of Delhi Police M K Meena to take charge as chief of the elite Anti-Corruption Branch.

NEW DELHI: Amid its bitter confrontation with Lt Governor, AAP government today refused to allow Joint Commissioner of [Delhi Police M K Meena](#), an LG-appointee, to take charge as chief of the elite Anti-Corruption Branch.

Delhi Government informed Meena that he cannot join the ACB as there is no sanctioned post of Joint Commissioner in the probe agency but the defiant official said he will follow the Lieutenant Governor's order.

The AAP government's decision not to allow Meena to take charge came on a day Delhi Police arrested Law Minister [Jitendra Singh Tomar](#) on charges of cheating and fraud in obtaining law degree.

Lt Governor [Najeeb Jung](#) yesterday had appointed the joint commissioner of Delhi Police as the head of the Anti-Corruption Branch superseding Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's hand-picked chief S S Yadav.

Earlier, an Additional Commissioner-level officer used to head ACB but the LG yesterday had elevated the rank of head of the probe agency from Additional Commissioner to Joint Commissioner.

Meena is currently serving as Joint Commissioner of New Delhi range and the LG's order said he has been given additional charge of ACB.

The [Arvind Kejriwal](#) government has slammed LG's move to appoint Meena.

The AAP government and Jung had last month locked horns over the appointment of Delhi's Acting Chief Secretary, sparking a turf war.

"There has been illegal attempts to create the post of a new chief of the Anti-Corruption Branch by creating an Emergency like situation. They are creating such a situation in order to bring the ACB under their jurisdiction. This is unconstitutional," Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said today.

"What is behind the conspiracy to create a new post of joint commissioner and appoint your own officer?"

"Has it been done due to fear that ACB will probe the CNG fitness scam," he said

yesterday.

He alleged that the officer appointed by the LG to head the ACB had tried to make suicide of a farmer in rally in Jantar Mantar in April as a murder "to fix" him.

DEFENCE, NATIONAL

STATESMAN, JUN 08, 2015

How long must veterans wait?

Avinash Chandra

Before the Third Pay Commission in 1973 Army personnel used to get 70 per cent of their last salary as pension. Civilians used to get 30 per cent of their last pay drawn as pension. This was because civilians used to serve up to 58 years whereas Army personnel used to serve up to 33 to 39 years [80 per cent] and up to 52 years [20 per cent]. Moreover the protection of employment under disability act was available to civilians and not to armed forces personnel. Under pressure from dominant civilians the then government increased civilian's pension from 30 to 50 per cent and reduced armed forces pension from 70 to 50 per cent with a promise of a uniform pension in terms of rank and length of service. This in common parlance came to be known as One Rank One Pension.

One has to understand that a soldier retires in the prime of youth when he is between 33 to 39 years of age and has to spend bulk of his life as a civilian. Due to lack of any vocational training or any on-the-job training in armed forces, the British started the practice of giving land to retiring soldiers. Due to prevalent red-tape this practice is dead. Pension used to be the means of subsistence for a soldier and his family. It is difficult to find alternate employment at 35 or 40. One has to compare extreme conditions of service, frequent moves and postings, long and uncertain hours of duty, vagaries of nature and extreme unfriendly terrain and climate which a soldier faces vis-à-vis the air-conditioned comforts and sedentary life which a civilian enjoys. Has anyone heard of a babu laying down his life fighting for a file? Practically every other day one hears of soldiers making supreme sacrifices.

In the period between 1947 and 1962, government policies were not in favour of the armed forces and there was deterioration in every sphere. Due to shortsightedness and impractical policies the armed forces suffered the debacle of 1962. Armed forces were brought down in order of precedence compared to police and civilians, resulting in total demoralisation and annihilation in the 1962 Indo-Chinese war. There was shortage of arms, ammunition, clothing and military equipment. Lack of high-altitude training and high-altitude clothing led to the rout.

From 1963 to 1973, things improved. Having realised the folly there was a sudden improvement in training, equipment, and size of Army. This awareness helped India defend itself against Pakistan in the 1965 war with flying colours. There was political

awareness of the need for a well-trained, well-equipped Army for defending the territorial integrity of the country. The size of the standing army was almost doubled; large-scale purchases of tanks, guns, aircraft, ammunition and all other stores and equipment took place. The 1971 war, creation of Bangladesh and bifurcation of Pakistan were moments of glory for armed forces and the nation.

Then came a deceptive period that lasted until 2000. As already stated, the Third Pay Commission in 1973 reduced military pensions to 50 per cent, mainly because the Congress government knew soldiers cannot protest, carry out agitations or go on strikes like their civilian counterparts. They made false promises with no intention of implementing One Rank One Pension.

In the fourth and fifth pay commissions the government, despite vague assurances, did nothing to resolve this issue. As time goes by the definition of OROP is getting muddled and to add to the confusion the central paramilitary forces have started asking for OROP. The Koshiary committee has clearly defined that OROP is just to equalise the shorter service put in by soldiers as against 60 years put in by bureaucrats, and paramilitary personnel.

OROP does not compensate for any other peculiarities of services as contended. Thus, OROP is just a methodology for calculating early retirement of soldiers and has got nothing to do with auxiliary arguments.

To give an illustration, two persons having same length of service and holding the same rank should get same pension irrespective of when they retired. At present, a Brigadier who retired in 1984 is getting less pension than a Major who retired after 2006. A Major who similarly retired pre-1986 is getting 53 per cent less pension than one who retired after 2006. A sepoy who retired in 1990 should get the same pension as a sepoy retiring in 2014. OROP will remove these anomalies.

In 1980 the Brig Singh Deo committee had clearly defined OROP. The problem is that the will to understand and solve the problem is and was lacking with UPA1, UPA2 and now with the NDA government. Right from 1973 till 2014, all political parties talk of OROP at the time of elections and then do nothing. The latest is our Prime Minister who says that even the definition of OROP is complex whereas his Minister of State for Defence has defined OROP in Parliament. So much for the attitude of Indian politicians. The bitter reason for holding on to OROP for so long is that governments know soldiers will not agitate or protest vehemently like Gujjars or Bank employees. India can give

millions of rupees worth of aid to Mongolia but when it comes to welfare of war veterans the reason given is that the coffers are empty.

It is a fact that veterans have always believed the wily politicians and kept quiet for the last 42 years. It will be pertinent to mention the Rewari rally where ex-servicemen were promised OROP on the BJP winning the elections. Ex-servicemen voted for the BJP and are being fed excuses and false promises.

If the country cannot afford a large standing Army let it reduce it to 25 per cent of its strength and have conscription for the remainder. It will improve discipline, obedience and awareness of civilians. The politician-bureaucracy nexus will never let OROP see daylight.

The Supreme Court has held that this discrimination in pension is in contravention of Article 14 of the constitution and directed the government to restore equality. But despite the SC orders no action is being taken.

There are approximately 25 lakh retired servicemen and about 70,000 retire every year. This tells you the magnitude of the problem created by political parties, especially the Congress. If the Modi government can resolve this issue, it will be a feather in its cap.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

STATESMAN, JUN 12, 2015

Growth & Poverty

Jaydev Jana

Growth enthusiasts often uphold the virtue of high economic growth as a significant correlation between high growth rates and reduction of absolute poverty, as witnessed in many rich countries. But the overall record of economic growth in India is fundamentally unbalanced and unsustainable. It fails to provide the minimum basic needs for survival to the bulk of the population living on less than Rs 70 a day (referred to as extreme poverty). They are chronically hungry, unable to access health-care, safe drinking water, sanitation and shelter. They cannot afford education for some or all their children, and also lack clothing. “High growth, though essential’, says the India Development Report ,”is not sufficient for poverty reduction on a substantive basis.”

Since the early 1990s, economic growth has been packaged as the magic wand to eradicate poverty. But India remains a super-poor country despite its impressive GDP growth rate (about 9 per cent). The latest estimate of the C Rangarajan Committee (July 2014) has pegged the total number of poor at 363 million or 29.6 per cent of the population. The more comprehensive Multidimensional Poverty Index 2013 report of the UK-based Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) says that 53.7 per cent of the population are poor in India. Though there can never be an agreement on numbers, it is beyond dispute that India is home to the largest number of poor with one-third of the world’s extreme poor living here.

As a matter of definition, it is generally useful to consider three types poverty: (1) Absolute (or extreme) poverty which is synonymous with destitution and occurs when people cannot meet basic needs for survival; (2) Moderate poverty that generally refers to conditions of life in which basic needs are barely met; and (3) Relative poverty that occurs when people do not enjoy a certain minimum level of living standards as determined by a government. Relative poverty occurs everywhere and is also said to be increasing. It can hardly be eradicated. However, eradication of chronic poverty defined as extreme poverty that persists over years or a lifetime is a forbidding challenge not just in terms of the magnitude of the problem, but also in terms of understanding the extent of the problem. India has a significant number of the chronic poor close to 50 per cent of the global figure. The Chronic Poverty Report-2014 of the Chronic Poverty Advisory

Network states that economic growth alone cannot eradicate poverty. The status of 'zero poverty' cannot be attained by 2030 without eradication of chronic poverty.

Indian politicians encourage entitlements for the benefit of the majority instead of the poorest 30 per cent. Subsidies, transfer of assets and other poverty alleviation programmes are trumpeted in the name of the poor, but benefits are reaped by the middle class, middlemen and non-elected officials as they are more articulate than the poor. The privation of the poor in a democratic set-up is almost relentless.

In his best-selling 2005 book, *The End of Poverty*, Jeffrey Sachs, adviser to the United Nations, has pointed out that at the basic level, the extremely poor lack six major kinds of capital: human capital, business capital, infrastructure, natural capital, public institutional capital, and knowledge capital. The poor are poor because they are poor. They are caught in a classic poverty trap "The poor start with a very low level of capital per person, and then find themselves trapped in poverty because the ratio of capital per person actually falls from generation to generation. The amount of capital per person declines when the population is growing faster than capital is being accumulated". (Sachs).

Indeed, poverty is a complex phenomenon. Inadequate ownership of income or earning assets is not the whole story. The poorest households also suffer from a problem of 'lack of access' to physical and human assets. A one-shot approach or a single-input intervention like offering a poor household an asset-bearing project can hardly alleviate poverty. Sachs believed that the public sector should focus mainly on investment in human capital (health, education, nutrition), infrastructure (roads, power, water and sanitation, environmental conservation), natural capital (conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems), institutional capital (a well-run public administration, judicial system, police force), and knowledge capital (scientific research for health, agriculture, climate, ecology). "Once they're on the first rung of the ladder of development, they'll start climbing just like the rest of the world". (Sachs)

A "poverty map" of India would show that the poorest areas are certain parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh and West Bengal. In general, the poor live in the country's semi-arid tropical regions. Shortage of water and recurrent drought impede the transformation of agriculture that the Green Revolution has achieved elsewhere. There is also a high rate of poverty in the flood-prone areas, extending from eastern UP to the Assam plains, and especially in northern Bihar. Poverty affects tribals in forest areas, where loss of their entitlements to resources has made them even poorer. In the coastal areas, there has been a deterioration

in the living conditions of fishermen because of environmental degradation, stock depletion and vulnerability to natural disaster.

The poor are generally silent. Not that they are bereft of ideas. Microfinance can alleviate poverty. Access to capital, even on a limited scale, can transform human lives. Over time, many among the poor can be in a position to set up a small farm, a craft workshop or a little store, indeed enterprises that can rescue them from poverty. With the help of microfinance, thousands of families in Bangladesh have improved their standard of living.

India suffers from a gross misunderstanding of the character of chronic poverty in rural areas. The Government treats it as income poverty. There is actually a biomass scarcity prevailing in the country shortage of food, fodder, firewood, timber, raw materials for artisans and so on. Easy availability of these items will definitely help reduce the rigours of rural poverty. The Gross Nature Product is as important as the Gross National Product. Forests have the potential to reduce poverty and spur rural economic growth.

Universal access to an integrated set of basic services is one of the most effective ways to alleviate poverty in any society. The poor should be entitled to the ecological capital in the form of land, water, trees and other natural resources... not merely as consumers but also as producers.

As Amartya Sen once observed “Poverty leads to an intolerable waste of talent.” He also mentioned that poverty is not just a lack of money; it is not having the capability to realise one’s full potential as a human being.

TELEGRAPH, JUN 12, 2015

Into the unknown: Marx was right, but what will happen now?

First person singular: A.M.

Cynics will say that there is cause for some celebration - a record has been broken. It is mid-2015, and the economic recession that set in in the United States of America, and had its impact, large and small, in different parts of the world, has persisted for a full eight years and shows no signs of abatement. Worse, this is certainly one of the most dismal phases in global economic history ever since industrial and other relevant economic data were put into some shape on a worldwide basis.

What is at the root of the American crisis has been discussed threadbare in scholarly papers as well as official and unofficial reports and documents. Technology under capitalism has advanced so spectacularly that productivity per person has soared. The consequence is the progressive shrinkage in the labour content in an average output. Production may go up sharply, but extra employment accompanying extra output is

negligible or even negative. Another outstanding feature of capitalist development is the nearly unbelievable phenomenon that, at a particular point of time, technology becomes its own master. An inner impulse drives it at its own momentum to explore new frontiers of technology which would shrink demand for labour even further.

The sequence is simple. New investment, in case ventured, will yield remarkably satisfactory per capita larger output, but, since employment will not grow in proportion, or not grow at all, the additional output will fail to be clear in the market and a crisis of under consumption will ensue. Investors will withdraw into their shell, the crisis will gradually become contagious, the capitalist system will be at a loss to decide which direction to turn.

The advanced industrial countries experienced huge mass unemployment in the Great Depression that took place eight decades ago. Organized trade union movements grew increasingly stronger every day, in country after country hunger marches choked the streets, deep resentment kept mounting at either the reluctance or the incapability of the government in charge to ameliorate the distress of the unemployed millions. The paralysis in decision-making was caused by blind adherence in most of the countries to the conventional economic thinking that, during such crises, public expenditure should be curtailed. This further aggravated the situation. John Maynard Keynes was yet to receive adequate credentials of a serious economist to be reckoned with.

In a few countries, the conditions were tailor-made for some rabble-rousing demagogues to avail themselves of the main chance and lead the suffering workers astray towards loyalty to fascism or Nazism. In contrast, the Soviet Union, which had entered the era of centralized and coordinated economic planning, could remain totally free from the scourge of mass unemployment.

Notwithstanding the fact that while in technologically advanced or semi-industrial countries, the load of unemployment today is no less than what it was during the crisis eight decades ago, no turmoil reverberates across the labour market. There are two possible explanations for this puzzle. First, most of the countries of capitalism are enormously more prosperous today than they were during the Great Depression, and are in a position to buy peace from the unemployed masses of all descriptions by offering them social security payments, which often closely aggregate to the quantum of the standard wage rate: the guitar-strumming brigade in Europe's streets are quite happy to lead an indolent existence in preference to joining any rabid crowd of troublemakers, so that occasional protests, such as the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations, peter out after a point. The second factor underlying the relative quiet among the unemployed is without question the set-back the trade union movement across the continents has suffered, following the collapse of the Soviet Union and subsequent developments. The ideological backbone of the working class movement has been severely damaged, and it will be unrealistic to expect a turnaround before a few more decades pass. In any case, the working class is in no position, at this moment, to thwart technological progress.

China, which has been getting industrialized at a remarkably fast pace, and, by and large, has been way ahead of all other nations in terms of the achieved rate of economic growth in the recent period, has been unable to avoid altogether the scourge of the global recession: its over-emphasis on exports to the US could not but hurt it. However, this adverse development has persuaded its decision-makers to direct their attention towards the hitherto-left-way-behind remote Western regions of the country, and the resulting increase in domestic purchasing power has partly compensated for the relative decline in export earnings from the US.

The other noteworthy point is the markedly less severe set-back the on-going recession has caused to Latin America as a whole than what was apprehended. There is little mystery behind this. The overbearing attitude of the US administration has alienated almost all the countries in South and Central America. They have learnt over the years that an alternative to total dependence on their mighty northern neighbour exists: they need to nurture and develop the complementarities in their own economies, and avail themselves of these to develop more intense intra-Latin-American trade. This would maintain a reasonably satisfactory rate of growth for each and every country and say no to Yankee imperialism.

But to get back to the central issue of the persisting recession. Does not today's sombre economic standstill hint at the emergence of a challenge to the dominance of the US that is a great global conundrum? At one end, socialism stands seemingly totally discredited with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the regimes associated with it in Eastern Europe. Even China, while by far the most rapidly rising economic power now in a position to challenge the dominance of the US, has opted for a genre of neo-capitalist development - of course under the exclusive auspices of the Communist Party. At the other end, though, the countries of classical capitalism are facing a persistent slowing down of growth accompanied by the phenomenon of unstoppable technological advance, underwritten by huge capital accumulation, which further impedes growth of income and employment.

The villain of the piece seems to be the ever-growing accumulation of capital funds caused by profit-making capitalist ventures. The pile of ever-increasing capital stock is used for innovations that lead to technological progress. A point arises where productivity induced by technological growth reaches such a fantastic height that the use of labour per unit of output drops perceptibly; overall employment, instead of rising begins to fall, affecting adversely the demand for goods and services, and the rate of profit is imperilled. This, then, is the irony. Marxism has been banished by the world to the back-burner, and yet, what Marx predicted 150 years ago with regard to the growing magnitude of the organic composition of capital, resulting in steadily declining profit, has finally come true - or so it appears. The major capitalist nations in the West are in a befuddled state of mind. In the US a mute debate is on about where the priority should lie: the war against "Islamic terror" or the battle against the very real economic stagnation. Neither of the two conventional strategies to conquer recession is working. The "monetarist" prescription of a balanced budget and low rates of taxation on richer sections to induce greater private initiative for new activities has failed miserably. The

alternative strategy authored by Keynes to take recourse to budgetary deficits, which, among other things, could generate employment and create new income via direct and indirect public dispensation, is not proving to be of much avail either.

The US authorities are desperately looking for opportunities to enlarge exports, both of goods and services and of capital, to shore up the rate of profit. That explains the American obsession with establishing a stable investment base in China, despite the ongoing political tussle between the two countries for emerging as the world's number one power. India may pine to export more goods and services and have a greater share of capital exports from the US. The American firms and investors are, however, not that interested: India cannot match China either in terms of the stability of the polity and its administrative framework or as a land of an invitingly luscious domestic market. The doggedly persistent economic crisis is assuming the form of a different kind of tension in Europe. The European nations are relatively indifferent to extra-continental interests and are more concerned about holding on to what they have. One grave consequence is increasing tension within the European Union, with richer members like Germany and France increasingly reluctant to underwrite the amelioration of travails inflicted on the southern European countries like Greece, Portugal, Spain and Italy, where the toll of the recession has been the severest.

It is a confused, mixed-up world. Tomorrow will, of course, be another day. Few, however, dare to take a wager on what shape it will assume. And Africa, apart from its fringes, remains the dark continent. Nobody has the time or curiosity to speculate what might have happened in case the huge load of accumulated capital choking the rate of profit and deepening the pangs of economic recession was gifted away *en masse* without conditions to the tottering African economies for planned, integrated development.

EDUCATION

TIMES OF INDIA, JUN 10, 2015

Now, 6-day week for CBSE class 6-8 kids

Pavan M V & Sandeep Moudga

BENGALURU: No more sleeping late on Saturdays. The CBSE has mandated six working days for teachers and students of classes 6 to 8. The board, in its circular on curriculum updates for 2015-16, has directed all its schools to function six hours 10 minutes each day for six days a week. However, it will remain a five-day week for students up to class 5.

Earlier, students from classes 1 to 8 of CBSE institutions could attend school from Monday to Friday while class 9-12 students were mandated to attend school six days a week.

According to the circular, a copy of which is available with TOI, CBSE has directed that teachers be retained after school for an additional 1 hour 20 minutes six days a week. This extra time has to be used for planning, preparation, feedback and other follow-up works of the schools.

Every teacher must devote 1,200 hours a year to actual teaching in classes 1 to 8, out of which 200 hours will be devoted to remedial teaching and attention to weak and gifted students before or after school hours. In case any teacher is required to devote more than 1,200 hours to teaching and planning, extra remuneration will be paid. The amount will be determined by the managing committee, the circular said.

The decision hasn't gone down well with many school managements in the city. The principal of a reputed CBSE school said, "Students will not get more time to spend with their parents or find time for their hobbies. This will create more stress on teachers and students."

Another school principal said many teachers accompany students in buses to drop them home. But if teachers are expected to work after class hours, they won't be able to accompany students and ensure their safety in school buses, the principal said.

ELECTRICITY

ASIAN AGE, JUN 13, 2015

Delhi faces 6 per cent hike in power tariff

Delhiites will have to pay more for electricity consumption from Monday. The Delhi Electricity Regulatory Commission has increased the power tariff by up to six per cent in the national capital. Both the Congress and the BJP are gearing up for another political battle to take on the AAP government over the revised power tariff.

The Delhi government reacted to the DERC decision, saying it should review its power hike order. A statement issued by city power minister Satyendar Jain said that the government would go into the root of the functioning of the power companies. He said that the DERC should have waited for the CAG audit before ordering an increase in the power rates in the city.

“The government will seek a review of the DERC order and will convey its disagreement to the commission in writing. The government has also decided to seek opinion for taking legal recourse against this decision, which in its view is uncalled for, since no financial burden should be passed on to consumers till all issues arising out of the functioning of power distribution companies are sorted out,” Mr Jain said, adding, “There are a lot of questions about the functioning of these private power distribution companies in Delhi, and the government is committed to get to the root of this problem.”

The tariff hike was necessitated as the appellate authority had earlier instructed the DERC to bring power purchase adjustment cost (PPAC) within three weeks. The deadline set by the appellate authority is to expire on June 15.

The revision in power tariff based on fuel prices has to be implemented every quarter. However, the revision of electricity tariff could not be done in the last three quarters and as a result the three city discoms approached the appellate tribunal for immediate hike in power rates since they were reportedly facing severe financial crunch.

With price of coal and gas going up in the recent months, the cost of power production has also increased. A senior officer said that the discoms were going to increase the power tariff by about four and six per cent. The officer said that the electricity production was also going to be affected as the discoms were facing severe financial crunch.

Many areas in the city are already facing major power cuts. The city also witnessed several protests in the recent past in different areas on the issue. Even the Congress and the BJP had held protests against the power cuts.

The power tariff hike is not the only worry for the Delhiites as the discoms are also going to increase the annual power rates in 2015-2016. The revised power tariff will pose a major challenge to the AAP administration, which had promised before the Assembly elections that it would provide cheap power and drinking water to the Delhiites.

Soon after the AAP took over, the first major decision it took was to provide 50 per cent subsidy to those consuming up to 400 units of electricity in the city.

The power subsidy will put a burden of Rs 1,500 crore on the government exchequer. Even the Congress government led by former chief minister Sheila Dikshit had been giving power subsidy. However, the Congress government's subsidy was in two slabs — one for those who consumed up to 200 units and second for consumption between 200 and 400 units.

ENVIRONMENT

HINDUSTAN TIMES, JUN 11, 2015

Govt may replace expert panel on Ganga with technocrats

Chetan Chauhan

The environment ministry is set to replace a panel of experts with a body of technocrats to decide the fate of hydropower projects on the Ganga, signalling the government's inclination to move forward with the ventures despite resistance from within and caveats from the Supreme Court.

The issue emerged as a major challenge for the BJP-led government that took office last year vowing to conserve the river that is revered by millions of Hindus and also provide electricity to all 1.2 billion Indians.

The previous committee headed by IIT Kanpur professor Vinod Tare recommended that only six of two dozen proposed projects on the Ganga's tributaries, the Mandakini and Alakananda, be allowed and that too after reducing their capacity to ensure minimum flow of water to sustain aquatic life.

Sources said the governments' plans would have been rendered economically unviable if it had followed the panel's advice, with generation capability depleted by 30-40%, but it would have helped strike a balance between environment protection and development.

The Supreme Court imposed a ban on construction of new hydro projects in Uttarakhand after the flash floods in 2013 killed hundreds, and it asked the environment ministry to examine the impact of such ventures on the local ecosystem.

Some arms of the government, such as the power ministry, opposed the expert panel's recommendation, noting that forest clearance was granted to these projects before the devastation, officials revealed.

"Their (power ministry) view is that the ministry cannot revise its own clearance now," a government representative said.

To find a way around, the environment ministry decided to get these projects reviewed afresh.

Sources said the ministry will set up a new committee likely to be headed by BP Das, a known proponent of hydro projects, with a joint secretary from the department as its convenor. The panel, when constituted, will be the third to review these 24 projects in less than two years.

The new body is likely to have more technocrats than scientists, say sources, while activists fighting to save the Ganga allege this is being done to ensure clearance for the contentious projects.

HEALTH SERVICES

HINDU, JUN 11, 2015

Now doctors have to write prescription in capital letters

BINDU SHAJAN PERAPPADAN

Also have to prescribe drugs with generic names

The Union Health Ministry is bringing in a gazette notification to this effect soon. —file photo

The wait is finally over. Chemists and patients can now bid adieu to physicians' illegible handwriting and the hazard of misinterpretation.

Doctors have now been asked to write prescription in capital letters and also put down the generic names of the drugs prescribed.

“The Union Health Ministry is bringing in a gazette notification to the effect soon after which the rule will be applicable across the country,” Indian Medical Association's Dr. K.K. Aggarwal told *The Hindu* here on Wednesday.

Doctors have welcomed the move saying that though it may mean ‘a little extra work’, but it's worth the effort if it helps patients. “The move is in the best interest of the patients, but in an environment where any doctor at any given time is flooded with patients, this system may take a little time to get used to. We have already started using the generic names of drugs and this we feel has contributed to reducing the total bill of patients since it allows them to buy drugs that are more economical,” said Dr. Anil Bansal of the Delhi Medical Association.

Meanwhile, the Centre had amended rules in the Indian Medical Council Regulations, 2002, directing physicians to prescribe drugs with generic names in legible and capital letters.

Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda had in the Lok Sabha earlier agreed with concerns of some parliamentarians that illegible prescription by doctors may lead to serious implications and even death in certain cases. The Minister had assured them that corrective measures were being brought about.

Mr. Nadda had informed the House that his ministry had approved the amendment to the Indian Medical Council Regulations, 2002, providing therein that every physician should prescribe drugs with generic names in legible and capital letters and they should ensure that there is a rational prescription and use of drugs. “The doctors across the country will be educated about the latest change to ensure that it is effectively implemented and that patients are benefitted in the long run,” said Dr. Aggarwal.

The Union Health Ministry is bringing in a gazette notification to the effect very soon.

IMMIGRATION AND EMIGRATION

TIMES OF INDIA, JUN 11, 2015

Britain's new immigration blue print bears bad news for India

[Kounteya Sinha](#)

LONDON: Spouses of Indians coming into UK with a legitimate permission to work may soon be barred from working in Britain.

Also the salary against which Tier 2 visas will be issued will also be increased by the end of the year to make "sure that our immigration system is focused on attracting the brightest and the best skilled workers".

Britain's new immigration blue print announced on Wednesday by prime minister David Cameron has announced a major crack down on migrant labour coming into UK from outside the European Union by setting up a Migration Advisory Committee which will consider a host of new measures to reduce demand for migrant labour.

The measures expected to be introduced by next year includes restricting work visas to genuine skills shortages and highly specialist experts, putting a time limit on how long a sector can claim to have a skills shortage, a new skills levy on Tier 2 visas to boost funding to UK apprenticeships and raising salary thresholds to stop businesses using foreign workers to undercut wages.

The Committee has been told to see how to put up restrictions on the automatic right of Tier 2 dependants to work, tightening up on the intra company transferee (ICT) route, including applying the immigration health surcharge to ICTs and raising the minimum salary levels that economic migrants have to be paid.

New immigration data showed net annual migration to Britain had leapt to 318,000, just 2,000 below the highest figure on record.

Officials of 10 Downing Street said "The MAC will look at proposals to cut non-EEA work migration and give British people the skills they need. Proposals on visa salary thresholds to be fast tracked in time for swift action in Immigration Rule changes later this year".

Speaking during Prime Minister's Questions on Wednesday, the PM confirmed that the Home Secretary has written to the MAC asking it to advise on reducing work migration from outside the EU.

Cameron said "This government is on the side of working people: in the past, it has been too easy for businesses to recruit from overseas, undermining those who want to work hard and do the right thing. As part of our one-nation approach, pushed forward by my Immigration Taskforce, we have asked the MAC to advise on what more can be done to reduce levels of work migration from outside the EU".

STATESMAN, JUN 09, 2015

Elusive terminus I

H Khasnobis

When movement of people takes place under compulsion, the experience can be traumatic, inhuman, oppressive and discriminatory. Refugees moving in search of asylum become victims of indignity. International law defines a refugee as someone who seeks refuge in a foreign country because of war and violence or out of fear of persecution on grounds of race, nationality, religion or political opinion. Until a request for refugee has been accepted, the person is considered an asylum-seeker. It is only after an asylum-seeker's need for protection is recognized that he enjoys refugee status. There is no such thing as a bogus refugee. One is either a refugee or not all.

The countries from where refugees move are violators of human rights. In 2014, according to Wikipedia, Syria, Palestine and Afghanistan were the largest "source territories" of refugees. In February this year, Turkey received the largest number of refugees, 2 million of whom were Syrians. Pakistan has been ranked the second, with 1.7 million Afghan refugees. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that at the end of 2013, there were 16 million refugees worldwide. In contrast, there were about 40 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) at the end of 2013. IDPs are not protected by international law, but are covered under UNHCR's mandate. As the nature of war has changed over the past few decades, with more and more internal conflicts replacing inter-state wars, the number of IDPs has increased significantly and they are the largest group that causes concern to UNHCR.

Refugee flows have been a recurring and normal feature of international politics. The western powers were motivated by a humanitarian concern for the welfare of the millions who were rendered homeless in the wake of the Second World War and because of their failure (before the war) to assist Jewish refugees. The refugees were seen as victims in need of protection from tyrannical states and communist governments. Thus, the creation of the refugee regime reflected the identities of western states as protectors of the persecuted and promoters of international human rights. UNHCR as the permanent institution of the international refugee regime was created in January 1951 without the consent and cooperation of the former Soviet Union, which in turn accused the western powers of protecting people associated with fascist and anti-democratic regimes. That the refugee regime reflected a degree of rivalry was evident in its creation and evolution. Refugees represented a form of power because the granting of asylum was generally used to reaffirm the failures of communism and the benevolence of the West. The rise of refugee-flows from Third World countries coupled with the end of the Cold War meant that refugees were no longer viewed as a form of power for the western liberal states. Refugees became a liability for the western countries.

The refugee identity is based on certain expectations regarding the behaviour of individuals claiming to be refugees as distinct from other types of foreign nationals that seek entry to a state. Refugees must reside outside their own country. Otherwise, they are considered internally displaced. Refugees are exceptions to the normal immigration

control rule. Immigrants seek to enter a state for economic opportunities, while refugees are motivated by political factors, primarily the desire to escape persecution in their home state. Refugees are reluctant to be uprooted and they lack the motivation to settle elsewhere. They are forced migrants and are considered to be passive and helpless. They are people in the margins. A refugee is expected to be submissive to the receiving state and conform to the measures taken for maintenance of public order. The 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol stipulates that refugees should seek protection in the state that is closest and safe. They are expected to come directly from a territory where their life and freedom are threatened. Asylum-seekers from North Africa travel to the Italian island of Lampedusa, 130 km from the Tunisian coast, to get refugee status. To move beyond the safest and closest state or traverse long distances to another state implies that the refugee is motivated by economic opportunities in the manner of immigrants.

The UNHCR claims that the most durable and favourable solution for refugees is localized protection with voluntary repatriation. Only in rare or unusual circumstances is permanent resettlement in a distant land seen as a viable solution. A large number of Vietnamese became refugees after 1975 when South Vietnam fell to communist forces. It required concerted action by many countries and the UNHCR to come to grips with the problem. More than 1.5 million refugees from Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos were resettled around the world creating sizeable expatriate communities in the United States, Canada and Australia. For its work in Vietnam (Indo-China), the UNHCR was awarded the 1981 Nobel Peace Prize for the second time.

The refugee regime has also created a different set of obligations on the part of the receiving states. Countries of first asylum face the primary obligation to protect refugees. This means that states geographically proximate to the refugee states share the largest burden. This has two implications. First, the western liberal states are not necessarily the ones most burdened with the implementation of the refugee regime. Second, geographically isolated states and those that do not share a boundary with a refugee-producing state consider that they should not be countries of first asylum. This is based on the assumption that for the refugee to access the state would be costly, involve extensive and time-consuming planning and likely to involve transiting through a number of other states, some of whom could provide protection or where the UNHCR is present. States have become more and more adamant in determining which state actually was or should have been the country of first asylum.

The 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol, supported by Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights provide a clear statement of duties for receiving states towards refugees and asylum-seekers. This is the basis of international refugee law. Procedures or arrangements for determination of refugee status should provide a guarantee against “refoulement”, by ensuring that persons who are entitled to protection do in fact receive it. Any asylum-seeker outside his home state, who has arrived in the territory or territorial waters of a receiving state, should not be returned without determining his refugee status. An asylum-seeker should have a fair chance to prove that he is in fact a refugee. This necessitates access to the legal system of the receiving state,

including legal assistance and the right to seek an appeal of a failed claim. In UNHCR's view, respect for the principle of non-refoulement can be most effectively ensured if claims to refugee status are determined expeditiously especially when a country receives both asylum-seekers and migratory movements. The safeguards contained in the non-refoulement principle prevent expulsion of refugees. The principle is so fundamental that no reservations have been made. It is based on the concept that a person seeking sanctuary in a holy place cannot be harmed without incurring divine retribution.

JUN 10, 2015

Elusive terminus II

H Khasnabis

On the face of it, there seems to be very little inherent risk to liberal European states from people fleeing oppressive regimes in search of protection. But in recent years, maritime migrants, commonly called boat people, have added a new dimension to international refugee movement. The Arab region and large parts of Africa are plagued by political, sectarian, and ethnic strife. The smuggling of people by human traffickers is not new nor the attendant losses at sea. The boat tragedy in April this year in two separate incidents in a span of ten days is stated to be the Mediterranean's worst migrant disaster involving refugees and migrants from Syria, Eritrea, Somalia and Libya... fleeing war or persecution. As many as 2,000 people had drowned in the Libyan waters. Six hundred died in the Lampedusa disaster of October 2013. In the words of Antonio Guterres, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "The disaster confirms how urgent it is to restore a robust rescue-at-sea operation and establish credible legal avenues to reach Europe. Otherwise people seeking safety will continue to perish at sea. But it also points to the need for a comprehensive European approach to address the root causes that drive so many people to this tragic end. I hope the EU will rise to the occasion, fully assuming the decisive role to prevent future such tragedies".

On humanitarian grounds alone, the EU's Operation Triton is inadequate. Its coast guard vessels can patrol within 50 km off the Italian coast. Triton replaced the bigger Operation Mare Nostrum, which Italy had suspended towards the end of 2014 due to a funds crunch and the inability of other EU countries to share the burden of search and rescue. Italy has asked EU to focus on preventing more boats from leaving Libya, the source of 90 per cent illegal migration to Italy and to double its spending on sea patrols off Europe's southern border. The EU has to muster political will to prevent human trafficking and illegal migration from North Africa and the Middle East. It cannot be the entire responsibility of Italy and Malta. So far, the EU's response has been lukewarm; it has not been able to formulate a sensible migration management policy.

The Rohingyas are one of the world's most persecuted minorities. In 1982, the Myanmar government passed a law that effectively stripped their citizenship.. They have very limited freedom, and no freedom of religion. They frequently experience land seizures, forced labour and arbitrary arrest. The Rohingyas are currently excluded from the resettlement programmes of other ethnic minorities of Myanmar from the Thailand-Myanmar border camps. An estimated one million Rohingyas have fled Myanmar and the refugees now live in Malaysia, Bangladesh, and Thailand and as far as the Middle East. In 2012, communal violence had erupted between Rohingya Muslims and Arakan Buddhists in Rakhine state, displacing 2, 00,000 Rohingyas and pushing many more out of the country. The expulsion has been going on uninterrupted. Myanmar's persecution of the Rohingyas has been strongly condemned by the UN and human rights groups. The Myanmar government has even blocked ASEAN from discussing their plight.

Thousands of Rohingyas, fleeing persecution in Myanmar, and Bangladeshis seeking jobs in Malaysia were abandoned in the busy Malacca Straits and its surrounding waters by smugglers fearing arrest as the Thailand government has cracked down on human traffickers. At least 8,000 emigrants were in peril, yet the South-east Asian nations, from whose shores they drifted, were reluctant to save them. Malaysia turned them away. Thailand and Indonesia appeared unwilling to give them humanitarian assistance despite appeals by UNHCR and international aid agencies. Thailand had deported many Rohingyas back to Myanmar to face further repression. Given the magnitude of the crisis, South-east Asian leaders must find a way out of this spiraling humanitarian crisis. Governments of Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia have a moral responsibility to take emergency action to avert catastrophic loss of life and to offer protection to victims of human trafficking.

The Rohingya issue calls for serious reflection. Governments, both in Myanmar and Bangladesh, have denied them citizenship. If they have no citizenship of any state, they have no homeland. If they have no homeland, they are forever refugees living within the geographical territory of Myanmar. If they are perpetual refugees, it is the duty of the Myanmar government to recognize them as refugees consistent with the "non-refoulement" principle. Almost relentless persecution of an ethnic minority group due to its religious belief, without any state accepting them as refugees, is totally unacceptable. The principle of non-refoulement is compassionate, enlightened, benevolent and humanitarian. But to become a refugee is inhuman. It is an insult to one's dignity and a curse to mankind. It is, in a sense, torture. One becomes a refugee due to the negatives of life in one's homeland, such as war, political unrest or persecution. There was a huge shuffle of citizens between India and Pakistan after Partition in 1947. Some 800,000

Palestinian Arabs were uprooted during Israel's War of Independence in 1948. Many of them had to flee to neighboring Arab countries that had rejected the United Nations plan to create two states one Palestinian, one Jewish in Palestine. Many have been living in refugee camps ever since, hoping to return, as the UN has prescribed, to lands lost in 1948. There was a second refugee wave in 1967, when Israel occupied the Egyptian controlled Gaza Strip and Jordan's West Bank, including their camps which were full of 1948 refugees. Any future peace deal between Israel and the Palestinians will need to resolve this issue.

The sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, the Balkan countries, South Asia and South-east Asia will remain refugee producing states for decades. The world tends to focus on a few refugee tragedies at a time. Important events that come readily to mind are the plight of the Tibetan refugees who established a government- in-exile in Dharamsala, the Vietnamese boat people, the genocide in Rwanda, East Timorese escaping rampant violence, Bangladeshi refugees in India during the 1971 liberation war, the ethnic Albanians driven from Kosovo, and Tamil refugees from Jaffna. Now it is the Mediterranean boat tragedies and the plight of stateless Rohingyas. But the refugee crisis is broader and more persistent than today's headlines. UNHCR reports that on an average, eight persons are seeking asylum every minute. The United Nations, individual countries and non-government organizations attempt to settle disputes, help the displaced and repatriate people. But these groups have yet to find a panacea for the hatred and unrest that create new refugees. The links between peace, stability, security, respect for human rights and sustainable development are increasingly seen as crucial for the achievement of durable solutions to the refugee problem.

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC RELATIONS

TIMES OF INDIA, JUN 10, 2015

DU, JNU among 4,000 bodies barred from foreign funding

[Bharti Jain](#),

NEW DELHI: In a fresh crackdown on non-profit organizations for alleged violation of provisions of the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act 2010, the Union home ministry has cancelled the FCRA registration of over 4,000 organizations over the last couple of months.

Of these, the licence of 971 organizations to receive foreign contributions under FCRA was cancelled on Tuesday. Among the prominent non-profit bodies stripped of their registration since May are the Supreme Court Bar Association, University of Delhi, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Indian Law Institute, Panjab University, Gujarat National Law University, School of Planning and Architecture, Escorts Heart Institute, Vikram Sarabhai Foundation and Kabir founded by Delhi deputy chief minister Manish Sisodia. This means that they can no longer receive contributions from foreign donors.



Sources in the Union home ministry said the cancellation of FCRA registration of the errant NGOs was ordered after giving them due notice and following the laid down procedures. The grounds for cancellation of licences included non-filing of annual returns and other anomalies.

As many as 3,035 NGOs based in Delhi, Kerala, Odisha, West Bengal, Manipur, Bihar and Andhra Pradesh have lost their registration over the first nine days of this month alone. Similarly, nearly 1,100 NGOs were stripped of their FCRA licence in May. In an earlier crackdown, licences of nearly 8,975 NGOs were cancelled in April last for their failure to file annual returns for three years in a row.

A series of actions by the Modi government against foreign-funded organizations and their donors has had the NGO community up in arms, which had accused the regime of trying to stifle the voice of dissent. This charge has been denied by the government,

which insists that all actions were taken in line with FCRA provisions.

While the FCRA registration of Greenpeace was suspended and its bank accounts frozen in April, as many as 16 foreign donors, including Ford Foundation and Greenpeace International, have been put on prior permission list since last year. The action against Greenpeace also included offloading of its staffer Priya Pillai from a London-bound flight in January. The Delhi high court had slammed the action and ordered removal of "offloaded" stamp from her passport.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DECCAN HERALD, JUN 12, 2015

Deterring democracy

Kuldip Nayar

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Dhaka was mistimed. It looked as if he had gone to shore up the sagging image of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. He has only heightened the anti-India feeling graph. New Delhi is not seen neutral.

I do not know why and for how long have we to support the authoritarian rule by Hasina in Bangladesh. True, she is the daughter of Sheikh Mujib-ur Rehman, who liberated East Pakistan from distant and oppressive West Pakistan. But that does not give her the right to flout the constitution and the accepted norms.

Take for example, the recent municipal polls in Dhaka and Chittagong. Ballot papers in favour of the candidates of the ruling Awami League were shoved into the ballot boxes to the horror of voters and others. Mujib must be turning in his grave. He had restored the people's right to express themselves against the military junta ruling from Rawalpindi.

No doubt, Modi's visit has given a shot in the arm of secular forces against the burgeoning influence of the fundamentalists, led by the Jammat-e-Islam. Hasina would still have her way. In fact, the cavalier manner in which she has suppressed the dissent arouses doubts about her credentials. Did she ever have conviction about a free state and the democratic way of governance?

The most glaring example is the manner in which she humiliated Bangladesh's first foreign minister Kamal Hasan. He is a colleague of her father Sheikh Mujib and is a legend in his lifetime for adhering to the values. The boycott of elections by the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) was an unthinking act.

True, Hasina made it obvious that she would go to any extent to win at the polls. Yet, if the BNP had participated, a few of its candidates would have been returned and opposed Hasina's point of view before the people.

Undoubtedly, general elections decide the fate of rulers. But the municipal vote is important to assess whether the party, which won, has fulfilled through governance the promises made during the poll campaign. India is lucky that the path on which the first prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru put the country—democratic and secular—is being followed diligently. His daughter Indira Gandhi derailed democracy and not only gagged the press but suspended the fundamental rights. But people did not take things lying down. They ventilated their pent-up anger when elections were announced. It is unimaginable that the even the mighty Indira Gandhi could be defeated.

It is another matter that when she returned to power in 1980, she went out of the way to punish even those bureaucrats who carried out their duties. But it is a pity that she took

revenge against those whom she suspected though they were nowhere near the Janata Party government.

The Congress, the author of the Emergency, has learnt its lesson. The party has regretted its misdoings. I wish the party had apologised to the nation. Unfortunately Bangladesh, a product of the people's right to say, has lost the vigour of expression which the nation once had. Such a happening is a sad development by itself. But it becomes all the more poignant when the person changing it is from the family which liberated the people from the clutches of West Pakistan.

No one else is to blame except Hasina. She is herself extinguishing the flame of democracy. True, that it should be done by the daughter of Mujib is not only disappointing but also disconcerting. She can shackle the nation still further is a harrowing thought. But it can happen since she has effaced the line between right and wrong, moral and immoral.

Placating Hasina

In this atmosphere of Hasina representing a dictatorial figure, Modi's visit was all the more unfortunate. He should have said somewhere while in Bangladesh that the country was a product of revolution and it should continue to radiate the same kind of thoughts. But he preferred to placate her even though the people of Bangladesh were disappointed because they expected India to give some sign that it is not happy with the way Hasina was functioning.

True, Modi was able to implement a long-standing agreement on the exchange of enclaves. But this understanding had the support of all parties when the matter was discussed in parliament. Of course, the credit for implementing the accord goes to him. But he should have used the opportunity to thank all the political parties in supporting the accord with a useful and endearing neighbour. For him to take the credit of demolishing the "Berlin Wall" is churlish.

I wish he had refrained from criticising Pakistan. Not that the criticism was uncalled for but on a foreign soil when he was talking about amity in South Asia, he should have avoided singling out Islamabad. He should realise, as his predecessors have, that the countries in South Asia someday must have a common market and lend a helping hand to each other in business, trade and development.

The people of Bangladesh were expecting some agreement on the Teesta water. But Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj's statement was unhelpful because even before undertaking the journey to Dhaka, she said that the Teesta water was not on the agenda during the Modi visit.

West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee's visit along with Modi was an important development. It should indicate to Dhaka that New Delhi is serious about settling the problems of the Teesta waters. That it did not happen during Modi's visit should not be

taken as if India was adamant in having its own way. In fact, Mamata's visit should please Dhaka that the settlement is may take some time but the process has started.

STATESMAN, JUN 09, 2015

Elder brother, not big brother

Mahmood Hasan

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Bangladesh comes a year after he took office. When Modi met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in New York in September 2014 and in Kathmandu in November 2014, he told her to have trust in him. All these contacts at the highest level laid the foundation for Bangladesh-India relations to move forward.

To make the visit meaningful, Modi focused on two important issues that Bangladesh had been waiting for – the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and Teesta Water Sharing Treaty. Since Chief Minister of West Bengal Mamata Banerjee was still not on board over the Teesta Treaty, Modi gave his full attention to the LBA. After some drama in the Indian Parliament, Modi steered the LBA bill through both houses of the Parliament and got it passed without any dissenting vote. He was thus armed with a 'gift' that Bangladesh was waiting for four decades.

The impression that Bangladesh got everything from the LBA and India got nothing is not correct. India too has gained a lot by settling this long perplexing problem.

The 22 documents signed by the two countries broadly involve the following sectors – commerce; connectivity; finance; administrative cooperation; and cultural.

The significant ones are – exchange of Instruments of Ratification of 1974 LBA and modalities for its implementation; \$2 billion new line of credit; connecting Dhaka with Agartala and Guwahati by road; renewal of trade agreement; use of Bangladesh ports; and setting up of Indian Economic Zones. India's Reliance Power and Adani Power signed deals with the Bangladesh Power Development Board to invest \$5.5 billion to generate 4,600 Megawatts of electricity.

From a closer look it would appear that Bangladesh has opened its doors for wide ranging economic cooperation based on connectivity. There, however, are some missing links.

Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who arrived a day earlier, was with Modi and Sheikh Hasina to flag off the bus service to Guwahati and Agartala. Mamata was also present at the handing over of the LBA ratification documents.

Through these bus services, Bangladesh has effectively given road transit to India, a long standing Indian demand. This road connectivity will naturally be extended to carrying goods by rail from mainland India to North Eastern states through Bangladesh. What will be Bangladesh's financial gain? We shall have to wait and see.

The line of credit will be used mostly to upgrade and build new infrastructure, particularly roads and railways. Connectivity through Bangladesh should give the much needed boost to the depressed economies of the seven North Eastern States. Bangladesh should have asked for 'Bangladesh Economic Zones' in Tripura and Assam.

The North Eastern States offer a ready market for Bangladeshi products. India needs to remove non-tariff barriers quickly and allow Bangladeshi exports to enter North East India. This will help reduce the huge trade imbalance.

Modi's visit would have been a complete success had he been able to deliver on the Teesta Treaty. India must not forget that as a lower riparian country, it is having serious problems with China over dams built on the upper reaches of Brahmaputra. Bangladesh, India and Nepal need to seriously engage to manage waters of the Ganges-Brahmaputra basin for the benefit of the people of the region. According to some reports, the Teesta Treaty will be concluded when Sheikh Hasina next visits Delhi.

Modi's visit came on the heels of Chinese Vice-Premier Liu Yangdong's visit in May, when six MOUs were signed to strengthen bilateral ties. India is deeply worried that China has made deep inroads in South Asia with massive economic assistance. Besides, Bangladesh has shown great interest in China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) development paradigm. India deeply mistrusts OBOR, as it feels it is a Chinese ploy to encircle and undermine India. Pakistan is a frontline state of OBOR. India clearly wants to allay Chinese influence in South Asia, particularly on its eastern front. Besides, Bangladesh is central to India's 'Act East' policy.

The other reason is that Bangladesh does not believe in state terrorism. Despite all the odds, Bangladesh has consistently expanded its economy over the past decades and is a lucrative market.

The visit has gone smoothly. Bangladesh has given a very warm welcome to the Indian leader. Modi has charmed everyone with his tweets and statements. Apart from official engagements, Modi took the time to meet BNP chief Khaleda Zia and several other political leaders.

Interestingly, the Indian media, which is traditionally dismissive about news on Bangladesh, has given wide coverage to Modi's visit.

What is surprising is that Modi, a leader of the ultra-nationalist BJP, has drawn a line between himself and the RSS and has successfully projected a mellow, secular image.

Modi's visit has put Bangladesh-India relations on a higher pedestal. He has truly behaved like an 'elder brother' and not a 'big brother'. To carry forward this relationship, the trust that has been built must continue as between two friends.

JUDICIARY

TIMES OF INDIA, JUN 11, 2015

Many inefficient judges were appointed by collegium, Centre tells SC

Amit Anand Choudhary

AG Mukul Rohatgi pointed out that many judges in various high courts are not following court decorum and discipline.

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Wednesday told the Supreme Court that collegium has appointed many undeserving judges in the apex court and high courts during the last two decades.

Appearing before a constitution bench headed by Justice J S Khehar, attorney general Mukul Rohatgi said that the collegium system was not following the principle of meritocracy resulting in inefficient judges being appointed in higher judiciary.

Rohatgi pointed out that many judges in various high courts are not following court decorum and discipline.

He said that even a SC judge was not coming on time during her tenure and she used to attend court proceedings in afternoon.

He raised question on why the judiciary shied away from taking any action against such judges.

LABOUR

BUSINESS STANDARD, JUN 12, 2015

Industrial Relations Bill renders strikes much more difficult

Workers to mandatorily provide a notice of two to six weeks to the employer before such action

Somesh Jha

It will become a substantial problem for the [trade unions](#) to call a [strike](#) if the proposed [Industrial Relations Bill](#) is enacted.

A provision in the draft Bill states the moment [workers](#) issue a notice to call a strike, they will not be able to take part in it because conciliation proceedings will begin when the notice reaches the conciliatory officer.

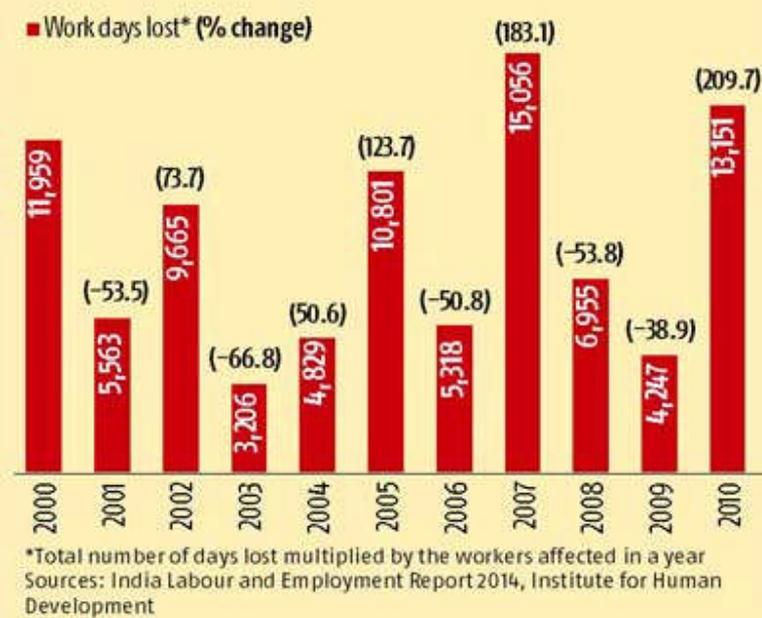
Workers in all industries will have to mandatorily provide a notice of two to six weeks to the employer before going on a strike. According to the proposed Bill, a strike will be termed illegal if it takes place during conciliation proceedings and during pendency of a case in the tribunal. When a strike notice is received by a conciliation officer, the proceedings will be deemed to have commenced.

"Conciliation proceedings shall be deemed to have commenced on the date a notice of strike or lockout is received by the conciliation officer," says the draft Bill.

At present, only workers in public utilities are required to issue a notice to employers before declaring a strike. It is only in public utilities that conciliatory proceedings begin when a notice reaches the conciliation officer. This will now be extended to all industries.

The punishment for participating in illegal strikes has increased manifold, making it more difficult for workers to stage an illegal strike. A worker participating in an illegal strike will have to pay a fine of Rs 20,000 which may extend to Rs 50,000 or imprisonment of one month or both. At present, a worker involved in an illegal strike has to pay Rs 50 as fine or imprisonment of up to one month or both.

WORK DAYS LOST DUE TO STRIKES



Workers will not be allowed to 'go-slow', gherao, squat on premises or stage demonstrations at managers' houses during conciliation proceedings. Instigating "such forms of coercive action" will not be considered legal, according to the proposals.

Mass casual leave will be considered a strike. The proposal states if more than half the workers are on casual leave, it will be treated as a strike.

"The Bill has imposed so many restrictions that it will become practically impossible for trade unions to call a strike. No strike will ever be termed legal if the proposals in the Bill are enacted. This right of the worker will be snatched away. Penalties have also been raised steeply. Workers cannot go on strike even seven days after conclusion of conciliation," said A K Padmanabhan, president of the Centre of Indian Trade Unions.

The trade unions have opposed the Bill and have threatened to go on a day's strike on September 2. The Centre has set up a ministerial panel to address their demands.

It has Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office Jitendra Singh, Petroleum Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, Power Minister [Piyush Goyal](#) and Labour Minister Bandaru Dattatreya. The panel is likely to meet trade unions representatives in the last week of June.

PARLIAMENT

ECONOMIC TIMES, JUN 10, 2015

Delhi Law Minister Jitendra Singh Tomar quits; resignation accepted

Tomar sent his resignation letter from the lock-up to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal who has accepted it.

NEW DELHI: Delhi Law Minister Jitendra Singh Tomar, who was arrested on the charge of possessing fake degrees, resigned tonight, capping a day of dramatic developments involving him.

Tomar sent his resignation letter from the lock-up to Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal who has accepted it.

Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia said "Tomar has sent his resignation to the Chief Minister a while back. And the Chief Minister has accepted the resignation. It will be sent to the Lt Governor tomorrow morning."

He said that "after today's events, Tomar has sent the resignation on his own."

Asked why Tomar did not step down earlier, Sisodia said "Jitendra Tomar will only say that."

Tomar said he quit "on grounds of morality. But I will fight this case through and win. After this, I will work for the party."

He charged that the central government led by BJP was "behind this conspiracy."

An AAP leader, requesting anonymity, said the process of finding a replacement for Tomar would be set in motion soon.

However, the immediate priority is the approach a higher court on the matter.

STATESMAN, JUN 10, 2015

Parliament snubbed

The right to unfettered speech is one of Parliament's most cherished fundamentals. Equal sanctity, albeit diminished in recent times by political factors, should be accorded to the "quality" of evidence or views tendered to parliamentary panels so that their findings or recommendations serve as well-considered guidelines for governmental action. "Parliament at work" is how a respected commentator hailed the committee system.

It is against this backdrop that the Speaker would be derelict in her duty as “custodian” of the system’s most hallowed conventions if she did not take grave note of the government’s efforts to influence the committees by ensuring that only sanitised, favourable or “doctored” evidence was presented to them. The immediate case in focus being the Human Resources Development Ministry yes, Smriti Irani & Co at their brazen best once again writing a strong letter to the chairman of the University Grants Commission slamming him for what he told the Parliamentary Standing Committee recently.

Not just that, but also “leaking” the letter to the media so that the signal was unmistakable: a thrust of the letter being that officials should be seen as a cohesive group, supporting the programmes of the government. Is this mega-star narcissism (some might question the mega-star description), or a re-run of the Emergency? Mrs Sumitra Mahajan is an experienced legislator, aware of the “professional” value of the reports of the committees and thus is honour-bound to deprecate any attempt to downgrade them. If she does not crack down on the HRD ministry with the same intensity as it did with the UGC chairman, then “tongues will wag” as indeed they have been after she had to backtrack on what the Opposition perceived as a bid to “protect” the Prime Minister. Or what sections of the Rajya Sabha insist was her “playing ball” with the government and excluding some critical matters from the purview of the Elders, where the NDA does not command a majority.

Increasingly is intolerance becoming a hallmark of Modi-sarkar now that the gilt of its electoral success has worn off, and its functioning comes under realistic scrutiny. Its unconvincing resilience is being exposed as the chasm between action on the ground and electoral bombast has become so apparent; the dithering on the OROP “commitment” being just one example. What a refurbished Rahul Gandhi is doing rushing off to wherever the media suggests there is opportunity and shamelessly trying to exploit what the UPA failed to tackle also adds to the discomfort of the NDA which could face a major challenge in Bihar. Rather than upgrade its “management” and educate its ministers on their parliamentary responsibilities, the government attempts to black out whatever embarrasses it. These are worrying signs and the Prime Minister would do well to take note.

POLICE

HINDU, JUN 08, 2015

MHA considers empowering Delhi Police

JATIN ANAND

May have a say in appeals, appointments of public prosecutors

Just when the standoff between the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Delhi Government seemed to be abating, the former is understood to be considering empowering the Delhi Police Commissioner to file appeals in court cases and appoint public prosecutors without taking the Delhi Government's nod.

If the MHA's decision comes into effect, the role of the Delhi Government — still smarting from the aftershocks of a tussle with the Lieutenant-Governor over whose writ was supreme in the Capital — in taking decisions on whether to file an appeal in a higher court in a particular case and on appointing public prosecutors for legal representation, will be completely eliminated, thus eliminating the latter's say in these matters much to the probable chagrin of the latter.

At present, the Delhi Government Home Department has to be consulted by the Delhi Police before filing an appeal or appointing a public prosecutor. The MHA's decision follows the Delhi Government's appointment of eight advocates as Additional Standing Counsel (Criminal) for conducting any prosecution, appeal or other proceedings in the Delhi High Court on May 27.

The Hindu had subsequently reported on the inclusion of Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) founder member Rahul Mehra's name on the list. Among the other eight advocates are Avninder Singh, Kamna Vohra, Rajesh Mahajan, Sanjay Lao, Ashish Aggarwal, Richa Kapoor, Ranbir Singh Kundu, and Nandita Rao.

The Department examines the merit of a case to take a call on whether or not to file an appeal for further litigation before referring the matter to the office of the Lieutenant-Governor for further consideration and subsequent action. The logic behind the move, according to an official, is that since the Delhi Police reports to the Home Ministry, it should be allowed to take a call in the two matters just like other police agencies such as the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and the National Investigation Agency (NIA), which propose the names of public prosecutors with the Central Government taking the final decision. Sources said since the police and law and order were subjects that fell under the jurisdiction of the L-G and not the Delhi Government, there should be no reason to refer issues pertaining to the subjects to the latter. As per the plan, the LG may soon be made the final authority to issue the order on behalf of the Home Ministry.

If the MHA's decision comes into effect, the L-G may soon be made the final authority to issue the order on behalf of the Ministry

PRESIDENTS

STATESMAN, JUN 08, 2015

Overused power

An ordinance, unless used in the rarest of rare cases, is a fraud on the Constitution. Britain, whose system of governance we follow, does not have ordinances. The oldest democracy, USA, manages without them. The Constitutions of former British colonies like Australia and Canada do not confer such power on the executive. The Government of India Act, 1935, conferred discretionary powers on the Governor-General and Governors of Provinces to promulgate ordinances to rule over a subject nation. This ordinance-making power always remained unpopular.

BR Ambedkar, justifying retention of ordinance-making power in free India's Constitution, told the Constituent Assembly, "That power is to be used to meet extraordinary situations and not perverted to serve political ends and shall not be used to perpetrate a fraud on the Constitution." Presidents Neelam Sanjiva Reddy in 1979 and Shankar Dayal Sharma in 1996 refused to sign ordinances to serve political ends and lived up to Ambedkar's expectations. President Pranab Mukherjee signed the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement (Amendment) Ordinance thrice, first on 31 December 2014, for a second time on 3 April and again on 30 May. It is for the first time a Central Ordinance has been re-promulgated with such profligate abandon. An Ordinance ceases to operate at the expiry of six weeks from the date of the meeting of Parliament. The Constitution says that six months shall not elapse between two sessions of the legislature, making the maximum life-span of an Ordinance seven-and-a-half months.

Article 123 of the Constitution empowers the President to promulgate Ordinances if a law is immediately necessary and both Houses are not in session. The Article is silent on re-promulgation. The President must be satisfied that circumstances exist which render it necessary for him to take immediate action. After the 44th Amendment, it has become abundantly clear that the Supreme Court can examine the President's satisfaction for the need for immediate action. A petition challenging the Land Acquisition Ordinance is already pending in the Supreme Court and the Bill to replace it has been referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament.

When the Supreme Court heard a petition of farmers on the re-promulgated Ordinance on 13 April, the Bench of Justices Jgudish Singh Khehar and SA Bobde showed no urgency in the matter and adjourned the case to 6 July in the hope the petition might become

infructuous by then. Re-promulgation of the Ordinance for a third time under these circumstances makes a mockery of the judiciary and the legislature. Arun Jaitley who called the use of Article 123 to promulgate ordinances “an abuse of the legislative power” while in opposition, is now championing re-promulgation of the Land Acquisition Ordinance. A relic of the Raj, such a power is an insult to Indian democracy.

RAILWAYS

BUSINESS STANDARD, JUN 13, 2015

Debroy panel report with receptive ministry

Govt in tune with some key recommendations such as independent regulator, merging staff cadres and reform in accounting practices

Jyoti Mukul & Sudheer Pal Singh

A committee headed by Bibek Debroy on restructuring of the country's railways, presented its final report to the ministry on Friday. Debroy, vice-chairman of National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog, is likely to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi over the weekend.

Some of the recommendations in the 319-page report are likely to meet opposition from staff unions but senior officials said the government was likely to adopt the proposals on setting up a regulator, on accounting practices and reorganisation of railway services.

The regulator, as envisioned by the committee, would be independent of the ministry and have quasi-judicial powers on rates, safety rules, fair access, service standards, licensing and setting technical standards.

The panel has also recommended giving non-discriminatory access on new tracks being built under the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) to both Indian Railways (IR) and private operators. "For this purpose, DFC Corporation should be made autonomous and separated from IR," it has said.

The proposal to merge the various railway service cadres is also likely to be accepted, with prospective effect. "One round of meeting with the Union Public Service Commission on this matter has already happened," said an official.

According to Debroy, the silo structures of the eight Group-A services within IR has hit team work. He has suggested either amalgamation of all eight existing services into a unified Railways Service or merging these into an IR Technical Service and IR Logistics Service; the panel has recommended the latter. The panel has also recommended lateral flow from elsewhere — chartered accountants, bankers, financial management experts, research assistants and scientists.

The recommendations on accounting are also likely to be adopted, for better calculation of costs. Till now the railway had focused on expenditure accounting, said an official. “With the diminishing government funding, the railways have little option but to look for non-government sources of funds. This imperative is a major driver for refinements in the way railways prepares and maintains accounts and costs its businesses,” the panel has said.

According to Debroy, the railways have given little attention to revising the norms for apportionment of joint costs and the system also neither tracks assets nor assesses the liabilities.

The committee has drawn a time line for implementation of the proposed recommendations for the first five years. This will involve a transition to commercial accounting, greater decentralisation to the zones and cleaning up of finances between the government and the railways in the first two years. Then, setting up the Railways Regulatory Authority of India and implementing human resource changes in the next three years.

TRANSPORT

ECONOMIC TIMES, JUN 11, 2015

Delhi government to deploy 4,000 marshals in city buses: Sandeep Kumar

Delhi government has decided to deploy trained marshals in all buses plying in the national capital to put a check on incidents of eve-teasing and violence against women.

NEW DELHI: [Delhi government](#) has decided to deploy trained marshals in all buses plying in the national capital to put a check on incidents of eve-teasing and violence against women.

The government has already planned to depute 4,000 well trained marshals in the first phase, which would be extended subsequently.

"Delhi government has decided to depute marshals in all DTC and cluster buses plying in Delhi. These marshals would be drawn from the Home Guards and civil defence who are well trained to prevent untoward incidents, particularly, violence against women in public transport buses.

"This will not only put a check on incidents of eve-teasing and violence against women and girls, but also will instill confidence among the women to use public transport as a safe mode of commuting," Delhi Women and Child Development Minister [Sandeep Kumar](#) said at a programme here today.

The government has also decided to install [CCTV](#) cameras in public transport buses to keep a close watch over any attempt of violence against women or eve-teasing.

"As a pilot project, CCTV cameras have already been installed in 200 buses. The result of which would be reviewed in a couple of months and accordingly, decision would be taken to replicate the experiment in the entire fleet," said Kumar.

Elaborating about other measures to make commuting by women in public transport, the Minister said, Delhi government has made it mandatory for all public transport vehicles, including taxis, to install GPS system for tracking of the vehicles.

"Taxi operators had sought some time to implement this and the government has granted time till June. Thereafter, all taxis and public transport vehicles are bound to install GPS for plying in Delhi," Kumar said at a programme "Safe Cities for Women and Girls in Action: Implementation Essentials and Key Take-Aways" by UN Women Safe Cities Global Leader's Forum.

Following recent incidents of sexual abuse of women by the taxi drivers in the [NCR](#), he said, the government has banned operations of taxi aggregators like Uber and Ola as the taxi drivers operating through such aggregators were not verified by the respective police

authorities.

"Prima facie, allowing taxi drivers, whose antecedents were not verified, to operate in Delhi might endanger safety of unsuspecting passengers, particularly, women in odd hours. Hence, government has banned the operation of such services," he said.

Delhi government was fully committed to ensure safety of women and girls in the capital city and it was the top most agenda of the government to make Delhi safer for women and girls in a coherent manner, Kumar added.

YOGA

HINDUSTAN TIMES, JUN 10, 2015

Babus told to master asanas for Yoga Day attempt at record

Moushumi Das Gupta

Pushing files during the day and practising yoga afterwards is expected to become the routine of government babus in the Capital in the run up to June 21, when a mass yoga demonstration is being organised to celebrate International Yoga Day.

For, the government does not want officials, who have been told to participate in the event, to “turn up without practice” as it might mar their chances of staking claim to the Guinness Book of World Record (GWR).

The ministry of Ayush (Ayurveda, Yoga & Naturopathy Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy) is attempting to set a world record for the June 21 event in the category of the “largest yoga class/demonstration at a single venue.”

A communication issued by cabinet secretary Ajit Seth to all secretaries states: “The Ayush ministry has applied for record of this historic occasion in the Guinness Book of World Records.... If some officials turn up without practice and their performance is not up to the mark, we will run risk of affecting the record claim.”

Seth has requested secretaries to ensure that officers in their respective ministries get “hands on training in the asanas to be demonstrated. To facilitate training, the Ayush ministry, appointed the nodal agency for organising the event, has sent instructional booklets and DVDs on yoga to all ministries. With just 17 days left for the event, the ministry is apprehensive. “It is not only about the numbers but also about the quality of demonstration,” a ministry official said.

Ayush has already paid £500 to apply for the record – which will be judged by a GWR India representative. HT failed to get a response from the sole GWR representative in India.

About 35,000 participants are expected to participate in the mass yoga demonstration at Rajpath for 35 minutes starting at 7 am on June 21. PM Narendra Modi has been invited to lead the event.