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BLACK MONEY

MODI VOWS TO BRING BLACK MONEY BACK

Clarifying his Government's stand on black money, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said people should have faith in his commitment that every rupee stashed in foreign banks as part of black money will be brought back.

Speaking in his second programme called Mann Ki Baat on All India Radio, PM said that the method and process of getting the black money back can be different and there may be differences in approach on how to go about it, but his Government was on the right track on this.

"As far as black money is concerned, you should have faith on this Pradhan Sevak. For me, it is an article of faith. Every paisa of the poor in this country, which has gone out, should return. This is my commitment. There may be differences over the approach and procedures, which is natural in a democracy. But as far as my understanding goes and on the basis of information I have, I can say we are on the right track," Modi said. He, however, added there was no exact estimate on how much money is kept in foreign countries.

Modi's statement comes at a time when the NDA Government is facing criticism for going the UPA way with regard to declaring names of persons believed to have stashed black money in foreign banks. The NDA Government had last week told the Supreme Court that the confidentially clause in treaties with other countries prevented it from disclosing the names of the account holders in foreign banks.

However, the Government later submitted a list of 627 names after the Supreme Court ordered it to give names of account holders in HSBC Geneva.

During his programme, the PM also underlined initiatives taken by the Human Resource Development Ministry (MHRD) with regard to differently-abled children. A special scholarship will be given to 1,000 such children who want to go for technical education, while Rs 1 lakh each will be given to Kendriya Vidyalayas and Central Universities for creating infrastructure such as specialised toilets, ramps, etc, for differently-abled students.

Lauding the participation of citizens in the cleanliness drive, Modi claimed that awareness is slowly reflecting in people's attitude and a behavioral change is being noticed now.

"Things are changing and people are becoming aware that they should not drop litter around. A good beginning has been made and things will change," Modi said. He talked about the changing mindset of people on the issue saying many personalities who come to meet him now discuss social issues with him. Modi used the opportunity to touch upon the issue of drug addiction among the youth. "The issues I touch are the ones on which the Government comes under attack. But how long will we hide things? For good intent, the truth has to be spoken and I will keep doing it," Modi said while adding that the

Government has a responsibility to address social problems like drug addiction and create a positive environment in this regard. He even invited suggestions from public on how best to deal with this menace and promised to speak on it during the next programme.

Recalling his first address on radio when he had urged people to buy at least one Khadi product, the PM said sale of Khadi products is up by 125 per cent during one week around Gandhi Jayanti compared to the same time last year.

Modi referred to his visit and interaction with soldiers at Siachen on Diwali day and said he went there as we could celebrate Diwali only because of them. He congratulated the armymen who had recently won the Cambrian Patrol event in Britain, where armies from 140 countries had participated.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS, NOV 3, 2014
Column: Why does black money matter?
Meghnad Desai

SUMMARYThe economic impact of the foreign hoards being brought back will be minimal.

Before the General election this year, there was a hue and cry rustled up by Anna Hazare and Baba Ramdev about the stashing of black money abroad. BJP politicians joined in. It was said there were thousands of hidden foreign bank accounts. Almost any economic problem of the nation was solvable if only we got the money back.

The idea of the 'drain', of a loot which is taken abroad, has a lot of romantic political appeal. Nationalists wanted to 'prove' that only due to foreign rule and its taking money out was India poor. But the drain was at no time in excess of about 5% of the national income. You could twist and turn to make it 10 %. No one asked how much of the amount was unrequited transfer, i.e., theft. If 'stores' were not bought in UK, they would have to be bought in Germany or France. The 'loot' then would be only the price differential paid due to imperial monopoly.

Both the communist Left and the nationalist Right parade the loot as the sole reason why India is not a land flowing with milk and honey. The root cause of poverty of any nation, as Adam Smith pointed out long ago, is not the retention or loss of the treasure of gold and silver but the productivity of its labour. Indian productivity, especially in agriculture, was (and remains) pathetic across all tenurial systems. Because the population was very large, lots of small surpluses added up to wealth of the elite, which inspired the legend the riches of Golconda. Poverty predated British rule and the departure of the British did not end the poverty overnight. The internal drain to the elite far exceeded the foreign one.

But the drain myth is powerful. It blames our poverty on someone else. Now, it is the black money-owners who have stashed the loot abroad. But is the problem the export of the loot or its existence? After all, the black money at home must far exceed the stash abroad. Our entire electoral politics thrives on black money. Politicians have openly said this. Kiran Kumar Reddy, the last Chief Minister of undivided Andhra Pradesh, said as much. Why do people make such a fuss about corruption, he asked. After all, the money re-enters politics at election time. Outside politics, real estate, wedding parties, alcohol sales, gold and jewellery trade are also all booming, thanks to black money.

Yet the fiasco of the foreign money is educative. There are fewer than 700 such foreign accounts. In the worldwide drive against tax evasion, other countries have found many more such accounts and no fuss has been made. Even if these six-hundred-odd names are revealed, they are only guilty of tax evasion and violating foreign exchange regulations. These are both civil crimes. The government can claw back only the unpaid tax portion and perhaps add a fine. Thus, the total 'drain' would be a fraction, perhaps a third at most of the money revealed. Has anyone any estimate of how much would that be ?

Illegal actions have to be punished. Tax evasion is illegal. That said, the economic impact of the foreign hoards being brought back (if that is possible) will be minimal. The task of eliminating domestic black money is so daunting no government will try it. Indeed, one should warn against any precipitate action. There should be a serious estimate not just of the size of the stock of black money but also its circulation and its effect on the economy before someone starts getting rid of it. It could otherwise cause a major economic disruption.

The problem of domestic black money is not that it lies idle or that it is barren. It circulates and powers the economy. It may do so in consumption channels rather than investments but it is not wasted. The question to ask then is how do we get this money to flow in all directions in response to market incentives rather than flow in furtive channels ?

The issue is income tax. Even for law abiding citizens the harassment of income tax officers is legendary. The answer is to abolish the income tax as it is at present. Even on sound economic principles you should tax consumption not income. It would be perfectly equitable to replace income tax by a heavy luxury tax. Now that fuel subsidy has been abolished why not put a 100 % tax on petrol consumption ? It will relieve the pollution in Delhi at a stroke. All those hoardings advertising fabulous new gated colonies invite a 150 % tax . Then, there are gold and jewellery. There is a black bonanza out there to harvest. The distortion is not the evasion; it is the tax itself and the way it is administered.

CIVIL SERVICE

INDIAN EXPRESS, NOV 5, 2014
26 IAS officers promoted to spl secy level

In a major late-night bureaucratic reshuffle, the Centre Tuesday promoted 26 IAS officials to Special Secretary level and shifted 35 Joint Secretaries.

While senior IAS officers Rajiv Nayan Choubey and Devendra Chaudhary have been made Special Secretaries in the Ministry of Power, Anjuly Chib Duggal has been appointed as Special Secretary in Department of Expenditure in Finance Ministry.

Uttar Pradesh-cadre IAS officer Rajive Kumar has been appointed as Special Secretary in Petroleum and Natural Gas ministry while Haryana-cadre officer Madhusudan Prasad as Special Secretary in Commerce and Industry ministry. Uttar Pradesh-cadre officer Vrinda Sarup has been appointed as Special Secretary, Department of School Education in HRD Ministry. Gujarat-cadre officer Rita A Teaotia will now be Special Secretary in Department of Telecommunications. Tamil Nadu-cadre officer Shashi Shekhar is now Special Secretary in ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change.

Haryana-cadre IAS officer Rajiv Arora, currently Joint Secretary in the Department of Commerce, has been shifted to the national intelligence grid or NATGRID in the same capacity. Himachal Pradesh-cadre officer Ram Subhag Singh who was current serving as Joint Secretary in Department of Defence has been posted as the Managing Director of NAFED.

Puneet Kansal, currently a Director in Power ministry, has been appointed as Joint Secretary in the Information & Broadcasting Ministry. Tamil Nadu-cadre officer R Jaya, currently Member Secretary in NCTE under Department of School Education & Literacy, has also been appointed as a JS in I&B Ministry.

ECONOMIC TIMES, NOV 5, 2014
Retiring central government bureaucrats may be told to write 1,000-word essay on achievements
By Aman Sharma,

NEW DELHI: All retiring central government bureaucrats will soon be able to leave behind a 1,000-word note on their significant achievements during service that can be put up online so that serving officers can draw inspiration and build on those ideas.

The ministry of personnel, which reports to the prime minister, has circulated a concept paper to all ministries, proposing to create a platform for retiring employees to volunteer to showcase "commendable work" done during service. "While the retiring employees can look back with satisfaction and a sense of fulfilment, this would also create a database of useful suggestions and information... It will also act as a motivator for

serving employees," the concept paper says, asking the ministries to give their comments by November 30.

The ministry has, however, specified that comments which are religious or political or against national interest must not be included in the note. It has also specified that commendable work will include "any work that has contributed to the efficiency, economy and effectiveness in government functioning, any innovation which led to improved work culture or manuals or publications related to work created by the retiring employee".

The bureaucrats will be required to submit a write-up of not more than 1,000 words six months before their retirement when they apply for pension. "Since most successful ventures would have contributions of the entire team, retiring persons must ensure that names of other members of the team are indicated in the write-ups," the ministry has said in the concept paper.

According to the ministry, initially an online facility will be provided only to retiring employees for submitting the note. "The exercise would be completed at least one month before retirement and the result uploaded on the departmental website. The website will clearly indicate that the contents and suggestions are as provided by the retiring employee," the exercise would be completed at least one month before retirement and the result uploaded on the departmental website. The website will clearly indicate that the contents and suggestions are as provided by the retiring employee," the concept paper says.

The retiring babus will also be asked to mention if they would be willing to volunteer for social work post-retirement. "This would be a wonderful opportunity to garner the resource of retiring employees for voluntary contribution to nation building post-retirement," the paper says.

The ministry has also implemented a programme to provide counselling to employees who are about to retire as the government intends to utilise the services of these officials for useful interventions in society like evaluation of development schemes being implemented across India. As per a government estimate, there are about 40,000 fresh retirees every year from central government civil establishments alone, while the number could be over a lakh if personnel from defence, railways, posts and telecom were to be included. There is already a pool of 50 lakh existing pensioners.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, NOV 4, 2014
Gujarat officer Adhia is financial services secy

In another bureaucratic reshuffle involving more than 25 officers, the government on Monday moved out financial services secretary Gurdial Singh Sandhu and replaced him with Gujarat cadre officer Hasmukh Adhia.

A 1981-batch IAS officer, Adhia is Gujarat government's additional chief secretary handling the financial services department and was principal secretary to Gujarat chief minister – Narendra Modi -- from May 2004 to May 2006.

Sandhu, who had been appointed to the finance ministry by the UPA government in March, was named chairman, National Authority for Chemical Weapons Convention (NACWC) at the cabinet secretariat, an official statement said.

Sandhu's transfer leaves expenditure secretary RP Watal as the only UPA appointee in the finance ministry.

Sandhu is the third secretary in the ministry of finance who has been transferred. Earlier, revenue secretary Rajiv Takru and economic affairs secretary Arvind Mayaram were removed from the ministry. All three, Takru, Mayaram and Sandhu, were appointed during the UPA regime.

In bureaucratic circles, the NACWC' chairman's post is considered a part-time job, given that there is a not a lot to do.

It is not clear if Sandhu – like his predecessor – will also head the performance management division that oversees performance of 72 central departments. The other officers affected by Monday's reshuffle are at the level of joint secretary including V Shashank Shekhar (home ministry), M Devraj (department of personnel and training), Mukesh Jain (disability affairs) and Harish Chand Agarwal (UIDAI).

Besides, the government also upgraded 26 IAS officers of the 1981 batch -- posted as additional secretaries at the Centre and empanelled to hold secretary-level positions -- as special secretaries.

TRIBUNE, NOV 1, 2014
LG administers pledge for unity

The Lt. Governor, Najeeb Jung, administered an oath on the occasion of "Rashtriya Ekta Diwas" to all the officers and staff of Raj Niwas today.

He said, "I solemnly pledge that I dedicate myself to preserve the unity, integrity and security of the nation and also strive hard to spread this message among my fellow countrymen. I take this pledge in the spirit of unification of my country which was made possible by the vision and actions of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. I also solemnly resolve to make my own contribution to ensure internal security of my country."

Employees, officials and staff members of the Delhi Municipal Corporations also took the pledge of "National Unity" on the occasion at North Corporation's headquarters, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Civic Centre. The pledge was administered by the Commissioner of the North Delhi Municipal Corporation, Praveen Kumar Gupta.

They took the pledge that they will dedicate themselves to preserving the unity, integrity and security of the country.

Besides, Delhi Chief Secretary DM Spolia administered the pledge to the principal secretaries and head of the departments.

Narendra Modi government working on Yoga modules for officials
By Soma Das

NEW DELHI: At a time when corporate houses are setting up gyms on office premises to help their employees stay fit, government officials across the country may get to dip into yoga and pranayam to heal their body and mind.

Police personnel may be the first to get to practise yoga on a regular basis at work as the department of personnel and training has urged the department of AYUSH, the nodal agency for Ayurveda and other alternative medicines, to work out such plans for government officials.

The department of AYUSH may start with a pilot of yoga modules for policemen, officials familiar with the matter told ET, adding that the feasibility of running such a programme for a larger government workforce is also being examined.

"AYUSH department is working on a proposal to introduce yoga among the police forces. Depending on how it goes and after considering other practical aspects, we will mull over scaling it up for other government officials" said an official, requesting not to be named.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has been practising yoga for years and raves about its benefits, gave a call for observing International Yoga Day while addressing the UN General Assembly in September.

The idea has gained momentum, with about 50 countries including the US, China, Canada, Japan, Brazil and South Africa endorsing it till last week by signing up for cosponsorship of a draft resolution which India's UN mission is preparing to declare June 21 as International Yoga Day.

Government officials and police forces in the country have a lot to gain from yoga and pranayam if it is institutionalised and made part of their habitual repertoire, said Acharya Balkrishna, co-founder of Patanjali Yogpeeth, part of Patanjali Group of Institutions founded by yoga guru Baba Ramdev.

"It will not only help the government workforce keep physically fit and mentally agile but also make a positive difference to their attitude and the way they serve the society," said Balkrishna, citing results of a psychosomatic research Patanjali conducted on lakhs of people of different age groups a few years ago. Particularly for police personnel, who

by the very nature of their work are exposed to stressful environment, aggression and violence, yoga and especially pranayam can be the perfect way to de-stress, he added.

Shortly after the Modi-led government took over, the DoPT had in July held a weeklong yoga camp in a central Delhi neighbourhood for government officials and found the response "very encouraging".

It is a matter of pride that our government officials are on their own taking such initiatives to embrace this valuable branch of our heritage, Balkrishna said.

BUSINESS STANDARD, NOV 6, 2014
India Economic Summit: Govt ready to privatise sick PSUs, says Jaitley

Says reform not about one sensational idea; implementation tough in developing society

Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Wednesday said the government would look at privatising some of the loss-making public-sector undertakings (PSUs), as supporting those for long with taxpayers' money was not possible.

"Certainly, I am open to looking at some PSUs that could do better in private hands," Jaitley said at the India Economic Summit, organised by the World Economic Forum. "They are being sustained merely on government support. That is not a long-term solution. Taxpayers cannot pay for loss-making businesses."

Certain PSUs were on the verge of closing down and people were going to lose employment, said the finance minister, adding if the choice was between these businesses continuing in their present form, and getting privatised, the second option would be preferable.

Four PSUs were beyond revival, so would have to shut down, Jaitley had told Parliament in July. As many as 79 PSUs were making losses and the public investment in these firms was to the tune of Rs 1.57 lakh crore.

Interacting with Klaus Schwab, founder & executive chairman of the World Economic Forum, Jaitley said the government was following the approach of divestment, and not outright privatisation, for other PSUs.

With regard to foreign investors, the government would follow a sectoral approach. Jaitley was hopeful of Parliament's approval to the Insurance Bill, which seeks to raise foreign investment cap in the sector to 49 per cent, in the winter session.

As some experts have criticised the government for not going for big reforms despite a clear mandate, Jaitley said reforms were not about one sensational idea; implementing reforms was more challenging in a developing society, as public opinion could not be confronted, and doubts had to be cleared.

Commenting on the bottlenecks created by the land acquisition law, Jaitley said he had no quarrel with an increase in compensation but he would focus on easing the procedure.

He talked about the need to deal with the provision disallowing private schools, hospitals and hotels on land acquired by the government, as those would make building smart cities difficult.

He also explained in detail India's position on trade facilitation, saying there was no ideological opposition to this issue. Even without a commitment to the World Trade Organizaion, India would unilaterally support moves to facilitate trade. But a solution to the dispute regarding holding of food stocks by India was required, he said, adding that the peace clause should not be phased out till this dispute was settled.

Asked how the new government planned to tackle the systemic failure caused by corruption, the finance minister said the government's actions, such as those on coal ordinance, were aimed at eliminating discretion. Similar reforms were being planned for other minerals as well, he said.

At the end of the session, Jaitley's message to foreign and Indian industry was: "We are waiting for you."

EDUCATION

TIMES OF INDIA, NOV 6, 2014
Police verification must for school recruits

Udupi: The police and education department have come together to fight sexual harassment of kids in schools, in the backdrop of a rise in the number of cases. Police told all private schools, including aided ones, to get conduct certificates of new appointees from the police department, before recruiting teaching and non-teaching staff. Divakar Shetty, deputy director of public instruction, told TOI this is mandatory. "Often, a child may not be able to speak up if she is subjected to sexual harassment in school. Parents too find it difficult to express their grievances," he said. It is now mandatory to install CCTV cameras. "Aided schools may lose out on grants by the government if they don't follow the rules, and private schools will face strict disciplinary action," he added.

An action plan has been drafted to press into service all district and taluk-level officials, anganwadi, Asha workers and women's group members in organizing awareness programmes in the district. The programmes will educate kids and parents on sexual and other harassment in schools.

SP P Rajendra Prasad said cops have placed complaint boxes in many schools and colleges. Police are taking strict action against ragging and sexual harassment reported on campuses, he added. Police verification will be done at the jurisdictional police station as many non-teaching staffers are being recruited by private schools on a temporary basis. After the recent incidents in Bengaluru schools, the need for background checks was felt too, he added.

HINDU, NOV 3, 2014
Delhi University students to be trained for cleanliness campaign in villages

Delhi University students will now be trained to work in the five villages adopted by the varsity as part of the Centre's Swacch Bharat campaign. The university has adopted five villages - Majra Dabas, Jatkhore, Sevapuri, Timarpur, Nandnagri - on the outskirts of the northern part of the Capital .

"We have tied up with Sulabh International (SI) to train 200 students in various aspects of cleanliness so that they can take forward the skills and practices to the adopted villages as peer educators," said Rajesh, HOD, Adult Continuing Education and Extension (DACEE) wing, DU. The week-long training programme is being conducted by the DACEE in coordination with the Swachh committee at DU and SI, an organisation that works in the area of sanitation and waste management.

"DU colleges have been asked to nominate five students each who will be trained under the programme to become 'certified trained volunteers'. They will further conduct

cleanliness training programmes in the villages," he said . In line with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan, the varsity had launched its own 'DU Swachhata Abhiyan' on October 2. A 20-member committee had been constituted as part of the drive to spread awareness of cleanliness, hygiene and safety. — PTI

INDIAN EXPRESS, NOV 7, 2014
UGC calls on students to give inputs for edu policy
Mihika Basu

In a move that would entail participation of young minds of the country in policy formation, the government has sought suggestions from students from across the country for a new education policy.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has written a letter to the vice-chancellors of all universities, calling for recommendations from students and asking institutes to organise a discussion among students on "Shikshit Bharat, Saksham Bharat—Quality Education for All" on the occasion of International Students' Day.

The UGC letter further says that it has been proposed to select the best recommendations and suggestions on the subject of education and invite one student leader from selected universities to Delhi to interact with the Minister of Human Resource Development and "to attend session of the Parliament when the subject of education is discussed".

ELECTIONS

Fresh elections in Delhi as BJP says it can't form govt

NEW DELHI: The over-eight-month-long suspense over the fate of Delhi assembly and government has ended with the capital heading for fresh elections. On Monday, the three major political parties — BJP, AAP and Congress — informed lieutenant governor Najeeb Jung that government formation was not possible in the present circumstances and pressed for immediate dissolution of the assembly. The LG sent a report on the matter to President Pranab Mukherjee.

This will mark the first time in almost a decade that assembly elections will be held in a state within such a short span. Bihar had gone to the polls in February 2005 and then in October 2005 under a similar set of circumstances.

After a flip-flop over government formation that stretched over months, BJP finally told the LG, when he invited the party for consultations on Monday, that it would be unable to form a government. The LG's invitation came three days after the Supreme Court commended his efforts for resolving the stalemate in the capital. The BJP, which is the single largest party in the assembly with 29 seats, including one ally, said it didn't have the requisite numbers.

Modi, Shah in favour of fresh polls

Sources said PM Narendra Modi and BJP president Amit Shah were also in favour of seeking a fresh mandate rather than trying to cobble together a majority. With its government at the Centre and the party performing very well in Maharashtra and Haryana in the recent assembly elections, BJP is confident of getting an absolute majority in Delhi.

HOW THE KEY PLAYERS ARE PLACED

Party	What's Working For It	What's Not
BJP	Clearly has the **momentum after wins in Maharashtra and Haryana**. Plus there's **Modi's personal appeal**, which is biggest among middle class voters. Many in this category likely to move from AAP to BJP	Doesn't really have a **recognizable leadership in Delhi**. Also, it does not have a strong presence in slums and unauthorized colonies, where AAP still holds sway
AAP	Continues to be the **favourite among the city's poor**. Its **intensive mohalla-level work** could pay off, along with its growing influence among Muslim voters. Overall, **party viewed as not tainted**	The 49-day stint of Kejriwal govt didn't go down well with the middle class, for which politics of daily dharna was unsettling. So AAP **likely to lose middle class vote**
Congress	Not much. Its top city leader, Sheila Dikshit, is not in active politics now. But Cong has been out of office for a year in Delhi and will hope the **city's development during its 3 terms** might bring back some voters	**Brand Congress is currently out of favour** with voters. Plus the party seems to have lost a major chunk of its traditional support base in slums and among Muslims

Even winning all three seats in bypolls would not have helped BJP return to office in the state after a gap of 15 years. Three seats — Tughlaqabad, Krishna Nagar and Mehrauli — in the 70-seat assembly fell vacant after three BJP MLAs were elected to the Lok Sabha. For full majority, a party would have needed at least 36 seats, a number none of the parties was able to muster.

Though fresh polls are now certain, the process of bypolls will continue till Election Commission of India strikes down the notification, which may not happen till next week. This means that political parties will have to declare their candidates for the bypolls before the last date of filing nominations on November 5.

The stalemate ended after Delhi BJP president Satish Upadhyay and Janakpuri MLA Jagdish Mukhi, for the first time, communicated the party's stand to the LG. Though the BJP had turned down the offer to form a government in December last year, citing lack of numbers, it had continued to "explore all possibilities" after its sterling performance in the Lok Sabha elections, especially in Delhi.

Do you think BJP has done the right thing by refusing to form a minority government in Delhi?

☐ Can't say ☐ Yes ☐ No

VoteView ResultsPolldaddy.com

The unwillingness of MLAs, irrespective of their political affiliation, to go for fresh polls had given BJP hope that it may be able to form either a minority government or get outside support. Finally, after months of speculation and allegations by AAP that BJP

was trying to poach its MLAs, the party took the moral high ground and turned down the LG's offer.

AAP chief and former Delhi CM Arvind Kejriwal.

After quitting the government on February 14 this year, AAP had approached Supreme Court seeking a direction to LG to dissolve the assembly. The party met the LG on several occasions to ask for resolution of the crisis and even approached the President to press for its demand. On October 28, SC had pulled up the LG and Centre for their delay in finding a solution though two days later, the court appreciated the LG's "efforts". The next date of hearing is November 11.

The BJP decided to clarify its stand after it was unable to mobilize support.

"We have communicated our stand to the LG. Our stand has always been clear, right from the beginning. We will not indulge in horse-trading to form a government. We are ready for elections. It is Kejriwal who has time and again changed his stand. It was his party which had gone to LG to defer dissolution of the assembly after the Lok Sabha results," said Upadhyay, who kept his meeting with the LG a secret till late Monday evening.

On Monday morning, the LG's office's had initially invited all three parties to meet him at 7pm. By afternoon, rumours emerged that BJP, led by Upadhyay and Mukhi, had already met the LG. The party refused to clear the air, prompting AAP to suggest that it might not even meet the LG. AAP demanded that the LG clear the air on his meeting with BJP before inviting other political parties. Party convenor Arvind Kejriwal and Patparganj MLA Manish Sisodia finally met the LG at 6pm.

"The LG told us that BJP has submitted a letter to him claiming that it doesn't have the numbers. AAP has pressed for immediate dissolution of the assembly and we hope that elections will take place as soon as possible," said Sisodia.

Delhi BJP president Satish Upadhyay.

Congress legislature party member Haroon Yusuf met the LG in the afternoon to say that the party not only wants the assembly to be dissolved with immediate effect but also wants the elections to be held with Jharkhand and J&K in December, said Yusuf.

Delhi Congress leader Arvinder Singh Lovely.

Going by procedure, the LG will dissolve the assembly as soon as the President gives the go-ahead. Following this, the Election Commission of India will schedule polls and quash the process of bypolls. Elections can be held anytime within six months of dissolution of the assembly.

EMPLOYMENT

HINDU, NOV 5, 2014
Reforming MGNREGA

The article, "How to reform and how not to" (Nov.4), sheds light on various reforms needed to strengthen the MGNREGA across India. As India is a diverse country in terms of resources and the demand for labour, reforms should be carried out in view of problems that exist in a specific region rather than reforming the programme universally. The success of the MGNREGA in various States shows that any programme targeting the rural poor can be implemented successfully only with greater political commitment and empowering grass-roots level institutions. In India, there is the problem of disguised employment in agriculture, and the MGNREGA should be reorganised in order to attract such unproductive labour from agriculture into more productive work in the rural areas. It should not remain as an employment-supply programme producing unskilled labour. There must be innovation so that labour should learn some skills while working. The MGNREGA can also have a greater role to play in the new flagship programmes.

Balaji Akiri, *Hyderabad*

The implementation of the MGNREGA in my village, Mannar in Alappuzha district of Kerala, has several shortcomings. First, the identified beneficiaries are not genuine or deserving. They are undertaking unproductive work that is of no use either to the villagers or even to themselves, an example being pavement cleaning. This is done every day and is not an isolated case. My enquiries show that this is what happens in most villages in Kerala.

Vijaya Krishna Pillai G., *Alappuzha*

MGNREGA has affected farmers, especially those who have faced a natural calamity. It has directly contributed to labour scarcity, besides leading to an abnormal increase in the daily wages of labourers. Farmers are entirely labour-dependent, especially in the early and later stages of cultivation. Finding labour is therefore a Herculean task. Most labourers prefer work under the MGNREGA as it has flexible working hours with the least amount of physical work, even at above the wage rate offered under the Act. In order to achieve food security and protect the interests of farmers, authorities must monitor the programme at different levels and ensure that MGNREGA work is not undertaken during the season of peak farming activity.

Poola Ramesh, *Hyderabad*

The first thing that struck me after reading the article was how disconnected urban India is from rural communities across India. Most of us hardly know about the other India (the rural Bharat) and its concerns. I always thought that the MGNREGA was just another populist programme that robbed the national treasury. I was even scornful of it being a source of employment. I stand corrected and am glad to know that it is bringing some positive change to the lives of fellowmen who have been left behind in the growth story.
GAURAV K., Rohtak

ENVIRONMENT

A warmer globe~I
KISOR CHAUDHURI

It was almost time for the 'bore tide' to hit the small river island, Chamta, located deep inside the core area in the Indian part of Sunderban Tiger Reserve. The local administration had warned of the possibility of a three-metre high wave that could pass through the channels in this delta where the Ganga meets the Bay of Bengal. Till 30 years ago, such high tides, locally known as sarasari gon, used to roll upstream of the Hooghly river with a distinct roar for almost 90 km and on their way, they crossed Kolkata. Such upsweeps, that are not often repeated these days, brought distress to riverside populations by sinking their boats and flooding the man-made dykes to inundate crop fields with saline water.

The space between the Hooghly river at the western edge and the Padma in Bangladesh across the "Bengal Fan" measures 342 km and is marked by a number of tributaries of the Ganga and Brahmaputra. This creates a labyrinth of channels and creeks. These narrow twisting and turning channels deposit huge quantities of silt on the higher grounds splitting the flow into two only to rejoin after a distance ~ thus forming tiny river islands. Sooner than one can imagine mangrove and a few other halophytic species like the salt tolerant 'Kankra' (Bruguiera gymnorhyza) dominate these lands and arrest passing silt in their stilt roots to help expand the new-born landmass. In due course of time, high rainfall ensures the proliferation of early "colonisers" like the endemic Dhani grass (Oryza coarctata) followed by the pioneer species Sundari (Heritiera fomes) that help stabilise the surface to create a refuge for primary consumers like the deer, wild boar and the giant Bengal monitor lizard ~ to be followed by their predator ~ the tiger. As many as 200 such islands make up the physical profile of the Sunderbans that remains among the most dynamic land formations on earth. These low-lying muddy islands where the surface height varies between 0.9 metre and 2.11 metre above sea-level remain highly vulnerable to the constant threat from indundation by surrounding channels that, during high tide, flow at a level higher than the island surface.

Alongside a great diversity of animals, human settlements have come up in these islands where virgin land with loads of nutrients attracted people from places as far as Midnapore to populate such hostile lands, in defiance of swirling waters and the forbidding tiger. Here, tides change every six hours, forcing the inhabitants to regulate their way of life in rhythm with the changing tides.

The will for survival has resulted in the creation of a lifeline of earthen dykes that surrounds all human habitations including the crop fields to keep away brackish water. Construction of the dykes was initiated by the zamindars of Bengal way back in 1700 to bring in settlers for paddy cultivation, a source of revenue. A mind-boggling length of

more than 4400 km of these dykes now act as a cradle for protecting humanity in the "Bengal Fan". If attached end to end, the dykes will make a high wall all the way from Kolkata to Mumbai and then to Delhi and finally complete the triangle by ending up in Kolkata.

Defying all speculation and contrary to my expectations for a spectacle of an awesome bore tide, a docile wave of no more than a metre high passed by Chamta where I stood. On its way it washed away a large part of the already crumbling west bank of the channel. Later, several river engineers confirmed that due to "natural" reasons as well as the creation of several barrages upstream of the Ganga, the flow rate of the channels has declined dramatically, resulting in silt deposits on the bed. This has decreased the depth of the rivers. Reverse flows during high tide bring back further loads of sediment from the river mouth to aggravate the situation still further. Uplift of the bed leads to spilling of the channels, enhancing the scope for indundation of islands and surrounding areas. A mysterious depression in the mouth of the Hooghly on the Indian side of the Sunderbans has for long challenged the imaginations of geographers and mariners. This massive submarine canyon acts as a barrier for further westward transport of the rivers' sediment and a sink for about a third of the rivers' sediment discharge. As one of those yet-to-be understood geographical phenomenon, in all suddenness this sub-terrennian chasm of great depth empties its water and silt content from the 500-metre level to 20 metres, with the resultant devastation. As an aftermath of such geological confusion an enormous amount of water and silt is thrown back towards the east, further lifting the river beds and inundating the riverside landmass.
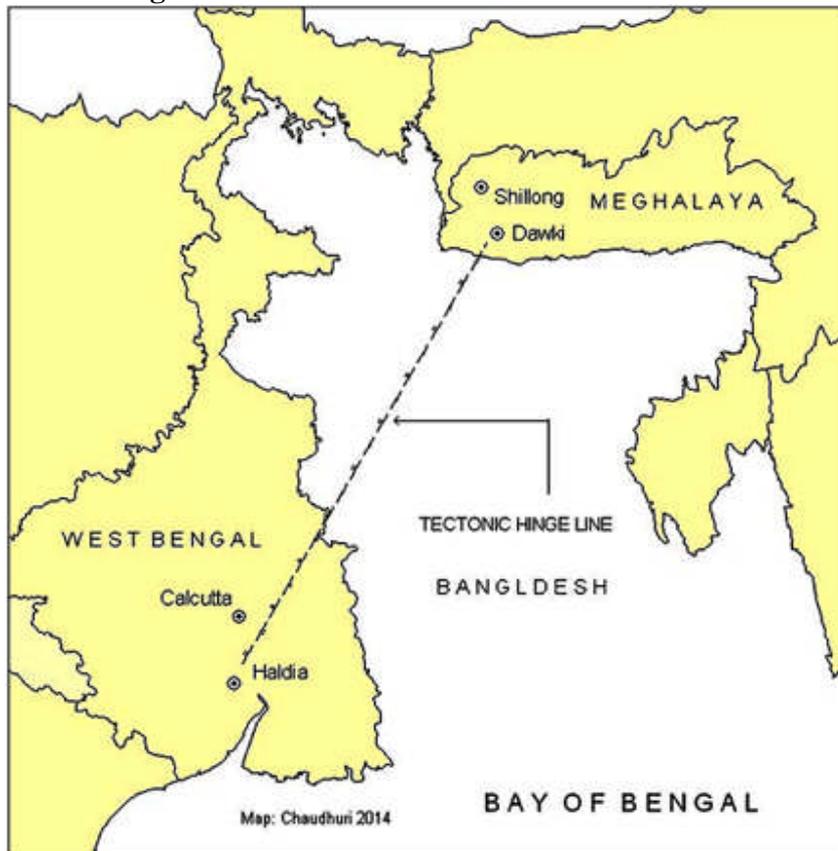
The Sunderbans estuary, a part of the Ganga-Brahmaputra delta, is dominated by sub-aqueous levees and covers a geographical space of 10 000 km2, of which only 40 per cent remains in India and the rest in Bangladesh. Climate experts claim that the water level of the Bay of Bengal in the estuary of Ganga-Brahmaputra river system shows a disturbing trend of an annual rise by 25 mm against the global average of 3.1 mm. They fear, if this rate persists then by mid-21st century global warming-induced climate change will be responsible for rise in sea-level to such extent that five million people in the low-lying southern regions of Bangladesh will possibly be inundated. New York Times reported that by 2050, the rising sea level will submerge 17 per cent of the land area of southern Bangladesh displacing 18 million people.

Contradicting such frightening predictions, other learned authorities report that over the last 100 years the delta warmed by 0.50 C and the sea level rose by a mere 0.50C, and hence, such predictions for a doomsday scenario seem a little too farfetched. The Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) has predicted that sea levels could rise 10 to 23 inches by 2100. The report adds that in recent years sea levels have been rising faster than the upper end of the range predicted. According to IPCC, the current rate of sea-level rise is expected to increase as a result of thermal expansion of the oceans and melting of most mountain glaciers, permafrost and partial melting of the West Antarctic and northern polar ice caps.

(To be concluded)

A warmer globe~II

Map: Chaudhuri 2014

KISOR CHAUDHURI

The IPCC (Asia) Report states that an unprecedented rise in the sea level, caused by global warming, has ensured increased "rate of retreat of glaciers and permafrost in Asia in recent years." Its consequences include loss of coastal wetlands at great risk of inundation of coastal settlements. Such terrifying predictions by a respected UN entity that holds the dubious distinction of scandalous prophecy, deserve serious re-evaluation. According to my prolonged observations, the glacial dynamics in the high Himalayan regions and habitat ecology of permafrost zones in northern Europe, particularly north of the Arctic Circle, have never displayed any sign of major alterations in the snow layers of either fields. However, to know more about such fearful assertions by experts, I looked into several research publications and the data raised more doubts in my mind about the veracity of such assertions than reaching any definite conclusion.

The IPCC Working Group II report ("Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability") was categorical that "Glaciers in the Himalayas are receding faster than (any glacier) in any other part of the world and, if the present rate continues, the likelihood of them disappearing by the year 2035 and perhaps sooner is very high if the Earth keeps warming at the current rate. Its total area will possibly shrink from the present 500,000 to 100,000 km2 by the year 2035." The observations, largely incorrect, made by IPCC in

this report were based on a WWF-Nepal Chapter's popular science article that predicted most of the glaciers in the Himalayas will cease to exist as a result of global warming. This atrociously fictitious prediction created a storm among academics globally as well as in India.

Considering the consequences it made littoral countries nervous. The Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research has reported that, if the predictions relating to global warming made by the IPCC come to fruition, climate-related factors could cause India's GDP to decline by up to 9 per cent; contributing to this would be the shifting of growing seasons for major crops such as rice, production of which could fall by 40 per cent. Around seven million people are projected to be displaced due to submersion of parts of Mumbai and Chennai, if global temperatures were to rise by a mere 2 °C (3.6 °F). Scientists from Trent University, Ontario, described the observations by IPCC (Asia Report) as "wildly inaccurate" especially where it quoted the area to be directly affected through the retreat of Himalayan glaciers. The IPCC report had claimed that the "total area will likely shrink from the present 500,000 to 100,000 km2 by the year 2035", but Cogley had rightly iterated that it could not have referred to the Himalayan glaciers, which cover about 33,000 km2 and not 500,000 km2 as mentioned by the IPCC. It was obviously a case of "copy-paste" exercise by a novice in the UN office. Scientists in India were up in arms against such grossly inaccurate and irrelevant observations by this premier scientific entity. A highly authentic report backed by scientifically collected data found that contrary to general perceptions, an insignificant area of Himalayan glaciers has actually retreated. The study initiated by scientists from different agencies including the Space Applications Centre, Ahmedabad, used satellite images aligned with immaculate ground data covering the entire Himalayan Arc beginning from Karakoram and ending at Sikkim. Two thousand and eighteen glaciers representing climatically diverse terrains in the Himalayas were mapped and monitored. It includes glaciers of Karakoram, Himachal, Zanskar (J&K), Uttarakhand, Nepal and Sikkim. Among these, out of a total of 2018 glaciers, 1752 glaciers (86.8 per cent) were observed having stable fronts, 248 (12.3 per cent) exhibited retreat and 18 (0.9 per cent) of them displayed the advancement of snout. The net loss in 10,250.68 sq. km area of the 2018 glaciers put together was found to be 20.94 sq. km or 0.2 per cent. A very insignificant decrease indeed. It is quite unlikely that such miniscule variations can ever influence changes in the level of the oceans.

Critical public reponse particularly from India, forced IPCC to accept their mistakes. In January 2010, the IPCC agreed that the paragraph was incorrect and unequivocally expressed regret for " the poor application of well-established IPCC procedures in this instance".

Many such unverified and un-authenticated reports that are making the rounds are promoting the concept that warming of the world's climate is responsible for much of the environmental anomalies including an accelerated melt-rate of glaciers in the Indian subcontinent. These commentaries can best be described as misleading and are deliberately spread.

Several of my visits to the snout of the Bhagirathi Kharak and Gangotri Glaciers spaced over three decades or more, never revealed any decay either to me or other regular visitors to the amphitheatre of glaciers. However, climate variations have, on occasions, exposed the "terminal moraine", again to be engulfed under ice after a brief span of time.

In their anxiety with malicious intent to convince the world that global warming is the reason for all the ills of the environment, bizarre ideas are floated by respectable authorities. A report in The Telegraph newspaper of London published on 29 October 2013 claimed that "holy smoke from the Hindu funeral pyres, Muslim cemeteries and Buddhist temples accounts for almost a quarter of the greenhouse gases blamed for global warming on the Indian subcontinent and the melting of the Himalayan glaciers". Such utterly disdainful commentaries show to what extent they can go to drive home their ill-found theories.

Just a few kilometres away from the Indian part of the delta, another agonising phenomenon takes place in an almost uncanny regularity ~ the killer cyclones. These storms suck up water along the coast and move inland with fearsome intensity. The southern districts of Bangladesh in addition to a few coral islands in the Pacific Ocean run the risk of being submerged by the surging waves. Low-lying areas on the Bangladesh side of the Sunderbans have already been subjected to severe erosion even in locations much above the high water mark within the tidal ranges. Cyclonic storms that originate from the Bay of Bengal and at regular intervals crash on the southern coastline of the estuarine geography are born out of combinations of complex meteorological inputs, much of which are still not fully understood.The coastline of much of the Sunderbans lying east of the international border between India and Bangladesh has a "free board" of merely 2.0 ~ 2.9 metres above sea level and the very common cyclones, many of which are characterised as severe cyclones (windspeed from 88-118 km/h), increase the vulnerability of the region. Global warming has no role to play in the formation or carriage of cyclones.

A tectonic hinge-line beginning from the south of Haldia Dock Complex runs towards the north-east for almost 800 kilometres and terminates close to the sleepy hill town of Dawki in the Shillong Plateau. Due to tectonic movements the portion of the Bengal Plate tilts towards the east following the alignment of the hinge line causing transfer of great mass of water in the "Bengal Fan" towards the east. For some curious reasons, IPCC had decided to overlook the tectonic reasons and instead, sponsored concepts like global warming caused by melting of ice fields from the heat generated by funeral pyres and incense. Global warming is a fairy-tale threat on the future of civilisation being preached by a community of scientists with malicious intent.

(Concluded)

BUSINESS STANDARD, NOV 6, 2014

Pachauri in, Sunita Narain & Ratan Tata out as Modi reconsitutes climate change council

If PM's schedule permits, apex body to meet before UN climate negotiation in December

Environmentalist R K Pachauri and economist Nitin Desai have been included in the Prime Minister's council on climate change, which has been reconstituted and revised by Narendra Modi.

The apex body taking decisions on domestic issues of climate change and on guiding international negotiations, it had become defunct over the past few years. It had been created by the UPA in its first tenure.

If the Prime Minister's schedule permits, the council — was reformed on Tuesday — would meet in November itself, before the next round of UN climate negotiations in December in Peru, sources in the government said. The meeting would be its first in four years.

The reconstituted council includes the ministers of finance, environment, power, urban development, agriculture and water resources.

Beside government officials, it will have R K Pachauri, head of The Energy and Resources Institute and chair of the UN Intergovernmental on Climate Change, and economist Nitin Desai on its board. Desai, too, has worked at the UN.

Chandrashekar Dasgupta, a retired diplomat and one of the most senior hands at climate negotiations, is part of the council.

The team also includes J M Mauskar, who lead climate negotiation teams for India for several years and has served in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change at a senior position. The director-general of the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, Ajay Mathur, has also been made a member. Mathur has been a key official in charge of the National Energy Efficiency Mission, negotiated on behalf of India and served as director on the UN's Green Climate Fund.

Businessman Ratan Tata and the head of the Centre for Science and Environment, Sunita Narain, have been dropped from the council.

The council was set up in 2006 . It had not met for the past three years as differences arose within the UPA government on the direction its climate change policy should take. The reconstituted council, sources in the government said, would provide guidance ahead of the negotiations for a new global compact, to be signed in 2015. It will also guide the domestic action plans of the government, with the NDA putting an additional focus on fast-pacing solar power deployment.

Besides setting up the top-level council, the NDA government has also begun several parallel processes to gear up for the upcoming climate negotiations. The first set of results of the studies it had commissioned to assess India's greenhouse gas emissions trajectory are expected by December. These, and internal assessments of the government,

will be used to prepare India's new voluntary targets to the global community under the new pact by June 2015. In climate jargon, these are referred to as "intended nationally determined contributions" or INDCs. India is expected to revise its existing voluntary targets, not only on reduction of greenhouse gases but on technology, finance and adaptation.

Sources said the government is planning to enlist experienced negotiators from beyond its bench strength, from within the ministries, to bolster the team that would participate in the talks this year in Lima and next year in Paris.

"These are two critical years and we plan to have a consistent and experienced teams that will take forward India's positive agenda at the Conference of Parties," said a senior functionary.

The involvement of old hands at the talks, such as Dasgupta, Mauskar and Mathur in the council, is expected to provide consistency in the Indian stance from previous years, sources said.

"We are working and will continue to work closely with groups of developing countries such as the G77+ China and the Like-Minded Developing Countries to put forth our views," said the functionary. "Overall, the situation has not changed much in terms of what different country groups want but India intends to have a positive agenda for the talks."

He added the developed countries, like the US and the EU members, continue to push for delinking their obligation of financial and technical support from the efforts that poor and developing countries put to fight climate change, under the new pact to be signed in 2015.

"They (the US and EU members) are still advocating an agreement focusing only on mitigation actions of all countries instead of a holistic package, which most developing countries oppose," he said.

The Indian government is expected to finalise its new non-negotiable redlines for the next round of talks in Peru. If the Prime Minister's schedule permits, the council on climate change could meet once before that happens.

INDUSTRY

Indian industry still unaware of potential benefits of IP creation: Govt

NEW DELHI, 1 NOV: Non-residents filed 78.3 per cent of the total number of patent applications (43,995) in 2012 at the India office of the Controller General of Patents compared to 18 per cent in China, 16.3 per cent in Japan and 50 per cent in the USA. This is an indication of the lack of awareness of the benefits of IP creation and enforcement for wealth creation among Indian industry, thus disabling them to realise the potential role of IPRs despite their innovative capability, according to Mr Chaitanya Prasad, Controller General of Patents, Designs & Trade Marks, DIPP, ministry of commerce and industry.

Speaking at a training and awareness programme on Intellectual Property Rights organised by Ficci and Intellectual Property India here today, Mr Prasad explained that IPRs are exclusive rights over such intellectual property granted to creators/holders which protect their rights from misappropriation by third parties without their authorisation.

They are now not only being used as a tool to protect creativity and generate revenue but also to build strategic alliances for socio-economic and technological growth. There exists a two-fold need with respect to intellectual property rights in India, greater understanding across the industrial sector about the fundamentals and different facets of IP and advanced learning in the area of patents in order to provide trained individuals who can perform at peak potential from early in their career, Mr Prasad said. He said IP protection promotes innovation, increases funding for R&D, helps firms realise, monetize and secure more value from innovations and grow market value, develop new markets.

Companies that use IPR do better. They have a higher market value, helps small & medium-sized enterprises and SMEs that rely on IP of all sorts have reported higher growth, income and employment than those that do not ~ in some cases as much as 20% more, he said.

IP protection provides consumers with innovative products and services, drives solutions to many of society's most important needs and helps protect consumers from inferior and dangerous counterfeits, he added.

Mr Narendra Sabharwal, former Deputy Director General, World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) & chairman, Ficci IPR Committee, said knowledge has become a more important factor of production than the conventional ones. This is evidenced by the fact that knowledge-based industries contribute 30 per cent of global GDP.

He said that the grant of a patent gives limited rights to the patentee to exclude others from making use of the patent. While this is important for businesses, there is a crying need for building awareness about IP, knowing its value, how it can be protected, how to use it and ensuring that no one infringes on the IP.

NCRB to connect police stations and crime data across country in 6 months
By Neha Alawadhi

NEW DELHI: If you violate a traffic rule in Delhi and forget to pay the challan, don't be surprised if this lapse shows up the next time you are caught over speeding in Chennai. The National Crime Records Bureau is working on a project that it says will connect all police stations and complaints registered in the country in real time within the next six months or so.

The Crime and Criminal Tracking Networks and Systems (CCTNS), which was approved by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs in 2009 with an initial outlay of Rs 2,000 crore, is a mission mode project under the government's National e-Governance Plan. It is being implemented centrally by the NCRB, which says it is working on a "centralised planning and decentralised implementation" model.

Conceived by former home minister P Chidambaram after the Mumbai terror attacks of 2008, the project aims to connect more than 15,000 police stations and nearly 6,000 higher offices in 28 states and seven union territories in the country to facilitate sharing of information related to crime and criminals that is updated immediately after collection on a centrally connected platform.

The project is running behind schedule due to a number of issues involving the different agencies concerned, including the home ministry, NCRB, state governments and system integrators.

"Technology is not in the DNA of basic policing as yet," said former IPS officer Kiran Bedi. "It (CCTNS) is lagging behind hugely and there is a lack of sense of ownership...(and) most of the departments are struggling with shortage of resources," she added.

The biggest challenge, according to NCRB, as it works to bring all the data and records up to date on the central or Core Application Software (CAS) is "assembling a variety of software" from different states, according to a senior NCRB official. Other issues include bringing about a cultural change in police personnel used to working on pen-and-paper and lacking exposure to technology.

The contract to develop CAS for CCTNS was awarded to Bengaluru-based IT firm WiproBSE 0.11 % in 2010. CAS was handed over to NCRB earlier this year. NCRB is now in the process of coordinating with states and union territories for further customisation and enhancement of the software. The states and union territories have been engaged with different IT companies for digitisation of their records and process implementation. Wipro declined to comment on the matter.

"The major scope of programme (at state level) includes setting up of data centre, disaster

recovery centre, automation of police stations, state-specific customisation and deployment of CAS, training of police personnel and digitisation of police records. It also includes hosting of a citizen portal to provide some specific services to citizens," said Sanjeev Nikore, president-APMEA, India business and senior corporate vicepresident, strategic engagements at HCL TechnologiesBSE -2.19 %.

The vendors, however, said lack of basic infrastructure in the states and poor or no internet connectivity at police stations was also an issue. NCRB acknowledged that this is a problem. "Wherever internet access hasn't been facilitated in police stations, the personnel are forced to take hard copies as well," said the NCRB official, who did not wish to be named. Another issue the vendors face is the digitisation of old records, where manual data in police stations has to be converted to a digital format. "The states where digitisation has been successful is because of active support from the state governments, such as in Tamil Nadu," said Deepak Khosla, president-Asia, NIIT Technologies.

Devendra Fadnavis sworn in as first BJP CM of Maharashtra

SUMMARYDevendra Gangadhar Fadnavis (44) on Friday created history taking oath as the first BJP chief minister...

Devendra Gangadhar Fadnavis (44) on Friday created history taking oath as the first BJP chief minister of Maharashtra at a grand function held at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. A team of nine ministers were administered the oath of office at the function that saw massive attendance by "aam admi" across Maharashtra. The cricket stadium resounded with a thunderous applause as Fadnavis walked to the podium to take oath as chief minister in the presence of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Fadnavis' wife Amruta took the centrestage proudly watching her husband taking the oath of highest office in Maharashtra. At the "Shatpratishat BJP" (100 percent BJP) show, it was "lotus" all the way from posters to slogans.

The seven cabinet ministers who constitute the team include Eknath Khadse, Sudhir Mungantiwar, Vinod Tawde, Prakash Mehta, Chadrakant Patil, Pankaja Munde and Vishnu Sawara. The two ministers of state who are in the team include Dileep Kamble and Vidhya Thakur. The composition of the first cabinet ensured there was representation across Vidarbha, North Maharashtra, Western Maharashtra, Marathawada and Mumbai (Konkan).

Similarly, care was taken to balance the caste and community factor with Vishnu Sawara representing the scheduled tribe community and Dileep Kamble the scheduled caste. The nine member team also includes Prakash Mehta who hails from Gujarati and Vidya Thakur who belongs to the North Indian community.

The presence of two women ministers in the first team has come as a pleasant diversion from the past Congress-NCP regime where women were dismissed as "symbolic" and did not get adequate representation in the cabinet.

While Fadnavis and Mungantiwar represent the cotton belt of Vidarbha which won 44 seats out of 62 in election , Chandrakant Patil and Dilip Kamble represent western Maharashtra where the party made deep inroads challenging the Congress-NCP and Khadse north Maharashtra and Pankaja Munde from Marathwada.

Mumbai which made a record victory in the assembly elections with 15 assembly seats out of 36 seats got a adequate representation with Tawde, Thakur and Mehta.

Overall, the first cabinet ensured a mix of old and new, regional balance and caste composition.

The two faces of Mr. Modi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's assumption that in prehistoric mythologicaltimes India had mastered genetic science and plastic surgery is irrational

What do we expect of our prime ministers? This is not a rhetorical question and you'll soon see why. We expect integrity, commitment, dedication, administrative expertise and, hopefully, a fair modicum of intelligence. But is that all?

As important as all the other qualities, we also expect rationality. We may not always agree with what our prime ministers say or are committed to do but we assume that their thoughts and actions are rational, well-considered and credible. In other words, even if their decisions turn out to be wrong — and that often happens — they won't offend against common sense.

It is here that I have a bone to pick with Narendra Modi. Speaking at the inauguration of the Sir H.N. Reliance Foundation Hospital and Research Centre last Saturday, he said: *"Mahabharat ka kehna hai ki Karn maa ki godh se paida nahi hua tha. Iska matlab yeh hai ki us samaye genetic science mojud tha … Hum Ganeshji ki puja kiya karte hain, koi to plastic surgeon hoga us zamane main, jisne manushye ke sharir par haathi ka sar rakh kar ke plastic surgery ka prarambh kiya hoga .*" [It is said in the Mahabharata that Karna was not born from his mother's womb. This means in the times in which the epic was written genetic science was very much present. We all worship Lord Ganesha; for sure there must have been some plastic surgeon at that time, to fit an elephant's head on the body of a human being.]

No doubt many Hindus share Mr. Modi's assumption that in prehistoric mythological times India had mastered genetic science and plastic surgery. As individuals they are free to believe what they want. But for the Prime Minister of India to proclaim this belief as fact — and that too at the inauguration of a hospital — is something else.

Why? This is because it's not rational to use mythology as the basis for claiming scientific achievements. First, there's no proof other than the assumption the myth is true and that's an unwarranted assumption. Second, how do you account for the fact the scientific knowledge and achievements you are boasting of have been lost, if not also long forgotten, and there is no trace of any records to substantiate they ever occurred?

Even worse, Mr. Modi's views echo those of Dinanath Batra. His books are now part of the curriculum in 42,000 schools across Gujarat and carry messages from Mr. Modi when he was Chief Minister. They claim stem cell research was known in the days of Kunti and

the Kauravas, television was invented at the time of the Mahabharata and the motor car existed in the Vedic period. Few would deny this is nonsense. Why wouldn't you say the same for the claim India mastered genetic science and plastic surgery in prehistoric times?

I have two further points. First, Mr. Modi wants to build smart cities, stresses the need for education and is proud of the successful mission to Mars. He believes in digital India, wants to import bullet trains and 'Make in India' state-of-the-art defence weaponry. These are 21st century ambitions. How does all of that sit alongside this belief in unverified mythology? Are they not contradictory?

Second, Greek mythology has centaurs and minotaurs; the Persians have the griffin; the British the unicorn; and fairy tales have mermaids and werewolves. Mr. Modi's position would also lead us to believe these creatures actually existed. But does anyone believe they did? Surely only in our dreams? Or only whilst we were children?

Ultimately, my problem with the Prime Minister's comment goes a step further, but it could be the most critical of all. Under Article 51 A (h) of the Constitution it's the fundamental duty of every citizen to develop a scientific temper. I can't see how the Prime Minister is doing that by blatantly claiming medical advances on the basis of unverified myths. His views clearly and undeniably contradict this constitutional requirement. In fact, if he thinks about it I feel confident Mr. Modi would not disagree!

These are troubling doubts and for the Prime Minister to be the cause of them is even more worrying. Finally, I'm dismayed this issue has not got greater attention in the media. Nor, to my astonishment, has any Indian scientist refuted the Prime Minister's claims. Their silence is perplexing. The silence of the media is deeply disturbing. It feels as though it's been deliberately blanked out by everyone.

(Karan Thapar is a television commentator and anchor of the Headlines Today programme, To The Point)

Narendra Modi wants to build smart cities, stresses the need for education and is proud of the successful mission to Mars. He believes in digital India, wants to import bullet trains and 'make in India' state-of-the-art defence weaponry. How does all of that sit alongside this belief in unverified mythology?

HINDU, NOV 5, 2014
Cabinet clears dissolution of Delhi Assembly
GARGI PARSAI

Ending eight months of political uncertainty, the Union Cabinet on Tuesday recommended dissolution of the Delhi Assembly, paving the way for fresh elections in the capital. Delhi has been under President's rule since February this year.

The Cabinet meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, gave its nod to Lt. Governor Najeeb Jung's recommendation to dissolve the 70-member House.

In his report to President Pranab Mukherjee, the L-G is reported to have mentioned that all three major parties — the BJP, the Congress and the Aam Aadmi Party — had expressed their inability to form the government because of lack of numbers.

The party leaders said that they were ready for fresh elections. The Cabinet's decision will now be referred to the President, who will dissolve the Assembly. Following the dissolution, the Election Commission is expected to scrap the November 25 by-elections to three Assembly seats in Delhi and order fresh elections. Polls will have to be held before February when President's rule ends.

Quick to attack the AAP, BJP leader Jagdish Mukhi blamed the former Chief Minister, Arvind Kejriwal, for "foisting" elections on Delhi by "running away" from government. "However, we are ready for elections."

"Delhi has won, the BJP has lost," retorted Mr. Kejriwal, whose party has moved the Supreme Court, seeking fresh elections. He said the BJP was avoiding elections because the party was devoid of leaders in Delhi. "Modiji is the Prime Minister. He cannot be the Chief Minister of Delhi," he told reporters. With corruption as the plank, the AAP had won 28 seats in the December 2013 elections. The BJP had won 31 seats while the Congress got a poor third with eight seats. President's rule was imposed after the AAP, which formed the government with the outside support of the Congress, quit after 49 days.

Polls have to be held before February when President's rule ends

POPULATION

PMO advances deadline for UIDAI, NPR to finish work by March

Officials say it took them four years to collect biometrics of 700 million people and issue Aadhaar numbers. Now they have to do the same for the remaining 350-400 million residents in the next five months

The Prime Minister Office has asked the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) and the National Population Register (NPR) to finish collecting biometric details of citizens by March next year. Earlier, the deadline was June,2015.

The decision was taken in a meeting attended by all the stakeholders in the second week of October. A review meeting was held on Friday in the Planning Commission. Two officials, who independently spoke to Business Standard, confirmed that the deadline has been advanced for both the UIDAI and the NPR, a wing of the Union home ministry.

But the new deadline has alarmed the bureaucrats in both the departments, especially the UIDAI which is currently without a head. Nandan Nilekani quit as UIDAI chairman earlier this year to contest the Lok Sabha elections on a Congress ticket.

"The deadline is most likely to be missed. The NPR has not started much work of collecting biometric details in the North-eastern states, where as the UIDAI is still in the process of tendering for big states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar," said an officer. The tendering is done to empanel agencies, which will set up camps to enroll people.

Till October 28, a little over 700 million people have been issued Aadhaar, a 16-digit unique identification number. This number is generated after capturing an individual's biometric details such as fingerprints and facial reading. The government has authorised both the UIDAI and the NPR to collect biometric data, but in their respective states. Once the biometric detail is collected, it is sent to the UIDAI for de-duplication. The UIDAI then generates the Aadhaar number.

The project was launched in September 2010, and the authorities were asked to collect the data of all residents aged above five years. Population of such people is estimated to be around 1.05-1.08 billion. The question is whether the authorities can complete the task against the new timeline.

Officials in the NPR indicated that it would be difficult to complete work in Assam and Meghalaya, as they were busy creating the National Register of Citizens. The UIDAI, which was recently assigned Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Uttarakhand and Chattisgarh with a combined population of 340 million, has just begun work in these states. Till date, around 89.3 million residents have been issued Aadhaar in these states, which is 26 per cent of the target population.

Many say the decision to advance the deadline was taken in view of the government's intention to link Aadhaar numbers with its various schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Generation Act. This is besides pensions, scholarships, direct benefit transfer and passports and attendance system in the government offices.

PRIVATE SECTOR

Pvt sector must be encouraged to broaden role in scientific research

Modern India has had a strong rhetorical focus on science and technology, considering it a key element of economic growth and the development of a rational and critical worldview. This rhetoric, while uplifting, failed to impact on poverty reduction and development. Careers in science no longer provide enough remuneration or prestige to draw top-level talent. Our translation of R&D into actual production has been weak. Technological imports, whether in electronics or fighter engines, have grown rapidly. Our scientific manpower was built on a small, educated pool of scientists, most of whom chose to leave for distant shores. Despite the dawn of the computing age, India missed out on semiconductors and silicon chips. We chose to adopt and purchase, instead of innovating.

A new science policy: India lies in the lowest quartile on R&D, both in terms of spending (<1% of GDP) and researcher count (<100 per million population). Our R&D allocation is dominated by the public sector (>80%), with universities left with a paltry 3%. In most countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, it's the opposite — the private sector contributes the majority, with universities coming at around 20%.

We need to address our limited scientific base. This will require a three-pronged approach focused on knowledge creation and commercialisation, inclusive innovation and subsequent knowledge diffusion and absorption. This needs to be supported by a focus on higher education, information infrastructure and innovation financing. The private sector needs to be encouraged to take greater risks in innovation, bolstered by an encouraging policy and regulatory framework.

Public policy has its role to play. With a stronger Intellectual Property Regime (IPR), matching grants and tax subsidies, knowledge creation can be boosted. A simplified technology licensing policy, combined with good infrastructure and a stable macroeconomic environment, can work wonders.

More physicists, fewer managers: Gross enrolments in higher education continue to remain below 20%. Just 16% of Indian manufacturing firms offer in-house training. Basic skill deficits need to be addressed by investments in primary, secondary and vocational education, and by building manager and worker skills. The quality of India's engineers and researchers needs to be improved substantially through investment in ITIs. Financial support for early stage technology development should be addressed by regulatory efforts to deepen the pool of early stage venture capital and a promotion of pro-poor inclusive banking. Micro, small and medium enterprises should be offered viability gap funding through existing government innovation programmes.

Expanding our technological base: Political prestige seems to drive our scientific allocation. Defence research and space are considered paramount, while our IITs are announced grandly and located in politically vital constituencies, with little consideration to their faculty and catchment area. Less than 20% of public research spending is allocated for civilian applications; 8% to the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), and 4% to the Indian Council for Agricultural Research (ICAR). Our public civilian research spending needs to go up. The CSIR, along with the ICAR and the Department of Science's laboratories, needs to be restructured and refocused on the market, along with more fiscal and managerial autonomy. University R&D should be supported by competitive grants, along the lines of the US National Science Foundation, along with greater academic partnerships and researcher exchange programmes. The Sponsored Research and Development Programme and Small Business Innovation Research Initiative need to be expanded.

Indian Patent Offices should be upgraded to cater to individuals and organisations. A special Court of Appeals for intellectual property rights should be set up, along with a policy think tank. Links between industry, universities and public laboratories should be strengthened by providing support for technology transfer.

Private and inclusive innovation: Private firms need to be encouraged to spend on R&D, by expanding early stage technology development programmes and utilising public procurement to promote innovation. Tax regimes should encourage a favourable treatment of R&D. Technology parks and incubators should be expanded through fiscal incentives. Inclusive innovation is also necessary. Formal R&D efforts for the poor should be scaled up and focused on informal enterprises. The CSIR's technology applications, like e-Choupal, should be scaled up across the country's villages. The National Innovation Foundation's grassroots innovation repository (>50,000 products) should be commercialised, with benefits flowing down to local communities. The Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network should be expanded to serve as an incubator for local innovation.

Grand challenges still matter. Cleaning up the Ganga or making India clean should be showcases for innovative products and practices. By making local communities and officials compete, we could solve our budding congestion and water crisis. A simple light-touch oversight mechanism that links such local initiatives with innovation hubs and provides viability gap funding will help provide appropriate monitoring to achieve realistic targets. 'Make in India' can mean high technology as well.

 Varun Gandhi is a BJP MP

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BUSINESS LINE, NOV 1, 2014
New CM promises legal framework for govt services

Emulating the Union Government, the Maharashtra Government on Friday announced that a Citizen Services Bill will be introduced in the State Legislature, making it legally binding on government departments to provide citizens with all the essential services.

Devendra Fadnavis told the media on Friday, during his first press conference as Chief Minister, that all the services provided by the various government departments will be identified within a month. Then a Bill will be introduced to give legal recourse to citizens if those services are not provided. .

Fadnavis said people are at present unhappy with the State Government due to delay in services. The Bill will try to bridge that gap and provide better services in a time-bound manner.

A committee set up under the leadership of the State Chief Secretary will provide a report within a month. "Many administrations try to provide an efficient and transparent government. But many a time the two aims do not work hand in hand. My Government will try to bridge that gap," Fadnavis said.

He said the State's economic condition is not very healthy. If all the promises of the past government have to be fulfilled an additional Rs. 52,000 crore would be required. "Our total focus on governance would be holistic. There could be mistakes while carrying out the administrative duties but there would be no mala-fide intention in those. We will ensure that the flow of governance, which has been upset for the last 15 years, is brought back to normal," he said.

TIMES OF INDIA, NOV 1, 2014
E-governance and digitizing all Public services could prove handy in curbing corruption "
P Vasanth Kumar

BANGALORE: Karnataka Lokayukta Justice Y Bhaskar Rao has said that embracing e-governance at a large scale and digitizing all public services could prove handy in curbing corruption at every level of administration

""Introduction of e- signature and e-documents would minimize the risk of corruption to the least and would also permit to use financial means in more expedient and effective way Minimizing possibilities of direct contact is very significant in abating corruption in state and self government institutions." he said in his key note address at the Seminar organized by Vigilance Department of South Western Railway at Hubli.

""Corruption takes root from the cultural, political and economic aspects.The technology could prove deterrent to a certain extent in curbing the corruption. But this menace could be contained only by changing the mindset of individuals, ""he opined.

TELEGRAPH, NOV 4, 2014
KEEPING A PROMISE

- The first steps to better governance are being taken Brijesh D. Jayal

Hours of debates and many news column inches have accompanied the completion of a hundred days of the new government in office. Save moderate voices, the general impression emerging out of this noise has been one of disappointment at the promised *achhe din* not having dawned overnight. When our democracy has given the current political dispensation a clear majority and a five-year term to deliver on its slogan of "minimum government, maximum governance", one wonders whether this hundred-day report card is about genuine progress or media grand standing. In reality, governance is far removed from electioneering. Elections are about selling dreams and scoring debating points. Governance is the period when such aspirations need to be fulfilled through administrative tools and institutions within the framework of laws.

The concept of governance is as old as civilization itself and signifies the process through which policy decisions are taken and then implemented. Within this broader concept, government, more narrowly, boils down to the executive, whilst governance is the process that is adopted. It involves many actors of which the government can either be the only one or one of many. The term "maximum governance" was a slogan actually implying good governance, the essential features of which are efficiency and effectiveness, together with transparency, responsiveness and accountability.

In our system, both at the Centre and the states, the government of the day is the executive and comprises the elected political leadership and the administrators. Whilst the elected representatives forming the government belong to the political domain and come and go through the electoral process depending on the public mood, it is the administrators that are meant to provide continuity, neutrality and general stability to the system of governance. Vallabhbhai Patel, independent India's first home minister and deputy prime minister, often referred to as the "Iron Man of India", is credited with having established the all India civil services, for which he is remembered as their 'patron saint'. Of these, the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Foreign Service are considered the elite. In particular, it is the IAS that is the *prima donna* of all the civil services, primarily because on its shoulders rests the onerous responsibility of efficient and effective governance in the country. Appropriately, Jawaharlal Nehru called the IAS "the steel frame".

Over the decades, there has been a progressive erosion of this steel frame. It is now not uncommon for it to be referred to as rusted by none other than distinguished members of the IAS fraternity itself. The respected scholar and administrator, N.C. Saxena, has observed that "over the years, whatever little virtues the civil services possessed — integrity, political neutrality, courage and high morale — are showing signs of decay". Not surprisingly, a 2012 report analysing surveys conducted in 12 Asian countries by the

Hong Kong-based organization, Political and Economic Risk Consultancy Limited, concluded that of those surveyed, the worst bureaucracy was in India, which made it a bureaucratic nightmare for businesses.

Not that any of these observations and findings are news for the proverbial *aam admi*. For as long as one can remember, the very thought of visiting a government office to transact any business conjures up visions of rent seeking, harassment or even outright insults, so much so that the term, bureaucracy, has now come to signify in the minds of the people all that is negative about governance and governments.

Bureaucracy in our context has come to denote a system where the inclination is to follow rigid and complex procedures and red tape and endless deliberation with no accountability for the end result. Such a system can hardly encourage innovation and new ideas and is a misfit in this information age. To extricate the system from this listless state, it follows that any attempt towards good governance must start with looking at the bureaucracy itself, since it must remain the primary tool through which effective governance can truly be achieved.

Media reports had indicated that within a week of taking over the reins, the new government had initiated a detailed exercise of identifying competent civil servants based on factors such as performance over the past decade, dedication to duty, quickness of delivery and political neutrality. To those with an ear to the ground, this was a clear signal that the government was determined to deliver on its promise of good governance by first laying the correct foundation, namely, following a merit system to identify those that would constitute its steel frame. Not surprisingly, this news escaped wider attention and debate. Had it been otherwise, it would have dawned on critics that the government was moving along a predetermined plan to revitalize the moribund administrative system, which has over decades been reduced to utter submissiveness and decay. This is not to say there do not exist pockets of excellence, but these are now exceptions rather than the rule and because they are misfits in the system, their worth is not valued. One is reminded of Ashok Khemka, the upright IAS officer of Haryana, who has been transferred more times than possibly even he can remember.

It was only when some 300 senior-level transfers and appointments were announced, including those of 48 joint secretary-level officers, that the subject stirred comment and debate. The general reaction that this was unprecedented in quantitative terms is perhaps a pointer to how widespread and deep the rot really was if you are a believer in genuine good governance. If, on the other hand, you look at it from a partisan standpoint, then there is always the bogey of political vendetta, which has been raised even by some eminent journalists. Since the first bold step towards the slogan, "maximum governance", has now been initiated, it is only fair that we await its impact before rushing to premature judgment.

To translate "minimum government", which was the other half of the slogan, into more measurable terms, it is worth looking at two significant aspects. One, the existing laws within which the government must function and two, how it is organized to govern

effectively. Looking at the first aspect, we have so many archaic laws in our statutes that it is possible to justify virtually any interpretation that may suit a *babu*'s whims. Who would believe that in this information age, the law dealing with the subject of communications is the Indian Telegraph Act of 1885, albeit with amendments?

It needs recalling that a commission appointed by the earlier National Democratic Alliance government to review outdated laws had recommended repealing 1382 acts of which so far only 415 stand repealed. Since a government based on archaic laws is a recipe for a system that is inherently out of harmony with the modern-day needs and aspirations of society, clearly it flies in the face of the concept of responsive governance. Not surprisingly, in his first address to the joint session of Parliament, the prime minister had stressed that archaic laws hamper governance and had pointed to the government's desire to identify such laws and weed them out. In pursuance, a committee already stands constituted to review all such acts and is expected to submit its recommendations within three months. Judging by the atmosphere now prevailing in the North and South Blocks, it is unlikely to seek extensions.

As for organizational aspects, the government has already made changes to existing structures by merging key ministries in an apparent attempt to bring more synergy in governance and make decision- making quicker and more efficient. It has also announced the winding up of the Planning Commission. A stop has been put to government departments taking their differences to courts for arbitration. Undoubtedly these are but the initial steps and with time many more should follow. Some may even argue that for a fledgling government perhaps it is better to make haste slowly, others may differ with some of these prescriptions. But for anyone to criticize the government for not attempting to streamline governance, one of its major election promises, certainly defies logic.

It would be fair to say that many preliminary and foundational steps towards achieving good governance have indeed been initiated. For a system of governance that has over decades found comfort in sloth and decadence, where power and pelf were more prevalent than accountability and transparency and where quick response to the needs of society found no place, the reversing of this trend will need all the energy and support that the government and others can harness. Vested interests and *status quoists* will put every conceivable obstacle in the path of these historic changes to try and derail the effort. Perhaps the hundred-day report card was one such psychological volley.

Now that merit as the criterion for promotions and appointments in the civil services has been acknowledged as a significant step towards good governance, there is equal justification to extend this principle to the armed forces. Recent happenings have demonstrated that all is not well with the seniority-based system for senior promotions and appointments at present in vogue in the uniformed services. Reports of lines of succession being planned and manipulated are merely the tip of this destructive iceberg and are neither good for morale nor for the internal health of the armed forces. The principle of merit-based promotions and appointments at senior levels in the armed forces is not just an extension of good governance but vital for national security as well.

RAILWAYS

Govt mulls pvt role in rly, scrapping of fare subsidy
Srinand Jha

Scrapping the railway board, merging the rail budget with the main budget and withdrawing the passenger fare subsidy are among the radical reform proposals the government is considering, official sources said.

Railways minister DV Sadananda Gowda is also contemplating a role for private stakeholders in policy-making and lateral entry for IAS officers into the top rail hierarchy to "de-centralise and corporatize" the functioning of the public transporter, which carries roughly 23 million passengers daily.

"The railways served the nation well in the initial decades after Independence, but its administrative and institutional structure and functioning seems archaic and unscientific in the present context and needs overhaul. These tasks are huge and difficult and will need to be attempted progressively," Rail Restructuring Committee chairman Bibek Debroy told HT.

The committee was set up recently by the Indian Railways to take forward Gowda's budget announcements on restructuring the rail ministry and railway board.

All these reform proposals have been mentioned in the reports of several expert committees.

A top government priority is to replace the "outdated and flexible" accounting practices with a professional "corporate accounting" system that can provide scientific data on the profits and losses of rail operations, the sources said.

"The railways must eventually work towards… charging passenger fares commensurate with expenses incurred in providing for the cost of travel. But the progressive hike in fares will also have to be matched with better passenger amenities," Debroy said.

Currently, passenger fares are hugely subsidized, resulting in an annual loss of Rs. 25,000 crore in this segment. A proposal to merge the railways' nine different cadre and provide for a single, unified cadre — to be called the Indian Railway Service — is also part of the surgical operation plan.

TRANSPORT

PIONEER, NOV 2, 2014
NO FUEL WITHOUT PUC CERTIFICATE FROM DEC 1

Come December 1, petrol pumps will refuel only those vehicles, which have "pollution under control" (PUC) certificates. The Delhi Government will soon issue a circular in this regard after consulting Attorney General of India. Delhi Chief Secretary DM Spolia told The Pioneer that motorists will have to show PUC certificates at petrol pumps to get petrol or diesel for their vehicles from December 1.

Sources said that the Government will start an awareness campaign from November 14; which was earlier planned from October 2.

Currently, only about 33 per cent vehicles have valid PUC certificates in Delhi. Out of total 80 lakh vehicles registered in Delhi, 30-40 lakh are on road every day. Out of these only 12 to 15 lakh vehicles have a valid PUC certificate. Delhi, having shifted to Euro-IV fuel, needs to upgrade the PUC norms urgently. It is noted that a high-power committee, set up by L-G, on air pollution in its recommendations have suggested tightening of PUC norms.

At present, there are 326 Government-approved computerised checking centres for petrol and CNG vehicles at different petrol pumps and workshops and another 169 such checking centres for diesel vehicles in the city.

About 10 lakh vehicles coming into the Capital from NCR towns are a major area of concern as there is virtually no pollution testing in these cities.

Besides a PUC certificate, the Transport Department will also give a sticker bearing registration number of the vehicle and date of PUC certificate validity so that fuel attendants could see it from distance.

As per the law, all vehicles plying in the city are required to carry a valid PUC certificate after one year from the date of first registration. Any vehicle found without a valid certificate is liable to be prosecuted under Section 190(2) of the Motor Vehicles Act, under which there is a fine of Rs 1,000 for first offence and Rs 2,000 for every subsequent violation. The present PUC is a paper print out giving vehicle details and validity of the PUC.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Bangalore is now Bengaluru

Karnataka govt on Friday issued notification to give effect to change of names for 12 cities, including the state capital

Almost 20 years after Bombay became Mumbai and Madras Chennai, Bangalore was renamed Bengaluru on Saturday.

OLD IS GOLD

Old name	New name
Bangalore	Bengaluru
Mangalore	Mangaluru
Bellary	Ballari
Belgaum	Belagavi
Bijapur	Vijayapura
Chikmagalur	Chikkamagaluru
Gulbarga	Kalaburagi
Hubli	Hubballi
Mysore	Mysuru
Hospet	Hosapete
Shimoga	Shivamogga
Tumkur	Tumakuru

The eight-year-old proposal to shed the anglicised name for the capital of Karnataka was realised with the state government issuing a gazette notification on October 31. The Union home ministry had approved the name change last month

Along with Bangalore, 11 other cities and towns in the state had their names changed. To mark the 59th Karnataka Rajyotsava (state formation day), Chief MinisterSiddaramaiah issued the notification on Friday evening. All new names have come into effect from November 1, 2014. According to the notification, the names are spelt in the Devanagari and English scripts.

Eight years ago a coalition government of the Janata Dal(S) and the Bharatiya Janata Party had sent the proposal to the Centre on a suggestion from the late U R Ananthamurthy. However, it was not cleared by the Centre immediately because the Maharashtra government argued renaming Belgaum would hurt the sentiments of Marathi-speaking people living in the district. The United Progressive Alliance government put the decision on ice.

The Union home ministry issued its clearance last month for changing the name of Belgaum, a border city, to Belagavi. The Maharashtra Ekikarana Samithi has contested Karnataka's move to change the name of Belgaum in the Supreme Court.

Bangalore is the fifth state capital to have its name changed. Bombay became Mumbai, Madras Chennai, Trivandrum Thiruvananthapuram, and Calcutta Kolkata. Pondicherry has been renamed Puducherry and Orissa became Odisha.

The other Karnataka cities that have shed their anglicised names are Mangalore, Mysore, Gulbarga, Hubli, Shimoga, Chikmagalur, Bellary, Bijapur, Hospet and Tumkur. They will now be called, respectively, Mangaluru, Mysuru, Kalburagi, Hubballi, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Ballari, Vijayapura, Hosapete and Tumakuru.

Karnataka's Law Minister T B Jayachandra said all government corporations and institutions would have to switch over to the new names. There will be no compulsion on private companies to change their registered names. Central government bodies like the Survey of India, the ministry of communication and information technology, defence and railways have given their consent for changing names of the 12 cities.

ECONOMIC TIMES, NOV 5, 2014
Narendra Modi government considering new standards on garbage segregation to complement Swachh Bharat mission
By Deepshikha Sikarwar

NEW DELHI: India is considering new standards on garbage segregation to complement Prime Minister Narendra Modi's cleanliness drive under the Swachh Bharat mission. "There are no norms for garbage disposal ... Such standards are required as they would ensure that effective systems are put in place for segregation and disposal of garbage," said a senior government official, privy to the deliberation on the matter.

The issue had figured in discussions at the first meeting of the high-level inter-ministerial group of consumer advocacy chaired by the consumer affairs secretary. The Department of Consumer Affairs has already directed the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to formulate quality assurance and process standards for potable water supplied through pipelines by municipal and government agencies, street food and garbage disposal, the official told ET.

There is also a proposal to set up a dedicated group at the BIS to ensure that these standards are not just formulated, but also implemented effectively.
India had put in place a solidwaste management policy in 2000 at the behest of the Supreme Court, but it was restricted to class-I cities. Municipal bodies have to carry out waste disposal as per these guidelines. Garbage disposal, however, remains an issue in many   cities.

"A mandatory standard prescribing segregation and disposal of garbage is necessary if the country has to move towards the cleanliness as is envisaged under the (Swachh Bharat) mission," the official said. Rules are re required for transport of drinking water and street food as well, he said.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India is already working on improving quality of street food on the lines of the successful Gujarat model. Countrywide standards are expected to provide a benchmark.

The group proposed to be set up under the BIS would work in close coordination with the food safety body, health ministry and the departments of rural develodevelopment and Panchayati Raj. "The idea is to draw up a time-bound rollout plan for the formulation and enforcement of these standards," the official said.

Modi had unveiled the clean India drive on October 2.