

Spart in infiltration bids

Now has melted on the passes and 300-400 armed jihadis waiting along the LoC on PoK side are moving in small groups of five to ten at a time to find safe infiltration gaps. Their attempt is to remain hidden from the sight of our vigilant border security forces. Most of their attempts are foiled but as the border is too long, and at several places the forests are dense, some of the infiltrators do succeed in sneaking in. In recent months, there has been a spurt in their infiltration bids. Apart from the melting of snow, the internal politics of Pakistan is also prompting the jihadis to make repeated bids of infiltration.

A new Government has been democratically formed in Pakistan. Its leadership had met with debacle on Kargil war issue. As such the new ruling party leadership understands that the path to any lasting solution to Kashmir is not through the barrel of the gun but through bilateral dialogue. This message has not gone well with the Pakistani Army and its spy wing ISI. For quite some time, Pakistan Army and its affiliates are under severe pressure of remaining confined to constitutionally stated duties and not interfere in civil administration. For the army, keeping the Kashmir pot simmering is the only way of maintaining its power and status as the ultimate deciding force in that country. Since open war with India is not the option, the Army-ISI combine is trying to keep the Kashmir pot burning. Hence we have repeated bids for infiltration.

Again, the border district of Kupwara in North Kashmir, which has several passes leading to PoK, has been chosen by the jihadis for infiltration and subversion. The entire area of Tangdhar, Machhil, Keran, Gurez as well as Hafrod and Mankal forests in Handwara border area have become active with the movement of jihadi infiltrators. They have contacts and conduits on this side of the line with who they are in liaison, as they need the guides to help them to build hideouts and also to know the routes of movement. Thus we find that after detecting the movement of armed jihadis in the dense forests in the above stated areas, our security forces have come into action. During past one month, two dozen infiltrators have been killed and a number of infiltration bids foiled.

Some dead bodies of the jihadis have been recovered and they are all foreigners as the documents recovered from their bodies show. Security forces and State police deployed on counter-insurgency duty have revealed that the slain or escaping militants are drawn from the main terrorist organizations of Pakistan namely Lashkar-e-Toiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad and Hizbu'l-Mujahideen. Obviously, in their renewed bids, the ringmasters of these terrorist groups have forged a unity of sorts and are operating under a duly considered plan. They have focused on a region for infiltration, which is called the hinterland of Sopore, the strategic town, where militants have made a strong base from the early days of insurgency. It has to be noted that in recent past, security forces have mounted clean up operation in Sopore area after they found that the terrorists once again wanted to have a build up in the town and its peripheries.

Our gallant defenders of the border all along the LoC have foiled all attempts of the infiltrators in the past. They are now far better equipped to meet this challenge. The Army has also upgraded counter-militancy operations and border security tactics. The Army has pinned down the suicidal jihadis to their positions beyond the LoC. And those who succeed in sneaking in, are challenged much before they could reach their destinations on our side of the LoC. At the same time, the Army and security forces are maintaining a strict vigil of the border especially of more vulnerable spots along it. The message to the infiltrators and their masters is that do what they may, they are bound to face defeat and humiliation on every front. Our security forces have created and maintained a formidable intelligence network to monitor and identify the infiltrators before they are able to reach their destination.

Menace of spurious drugs

The menace of supplying spurious drugs to hospitals has been hanging fire for a long time. In early April, we had taken up in these columns the serious issue of spurious drugs supplied to Government hospitals and dispensaries in the State. Out of 156 drug samples taken by the team of CDSCO from various hospitals and pharmacies in the State, results of 50 of them have been received which show that 27 drugs were sub-standard. This is based on the reports received from the Government Analyst Central Drugs Laboratory Kolkata and Government Analyst Drugs Laboratory Chandigarh. The question arises that when the matter was brought to the notice of medical authorities, why did they not take any action to control the sale and supply of sub-standard drugs to unsuspecting people. Either there is a nexus of sorts among the elements with vested interests or that the medical authorities are least interested in performing their official duty with a sense of responsibility. It is simply lamentable that concerned authorities do not move even after they have been pilloried for earlier lapses. The Department of Health is playing with the health of the people. They cannot have the leave to do so and will have to be answerable to the civil society.

Small gives big headache

Poonam I Kaushish

How big is big? When does big become small? Does beautiful small make big ugly? Will small fetch better dividends than big? Or vice-versa? Confused? Don't be. Not when we are talking about our netagan and their vote-bank shenanigans. The latest brain-wave to emerge from the Congress stable is to once again carve big States into small, Telangana from Andhra. Raising a moot point: Will it come out smelling of roses or reeking of rotten eggs?

After four years of going back on its pledge, the Congress accepted one of the oldest demands in independent India for a separate State and split Andhra Pradesh. The new 29th State Telangana comprising 10 districts including Hyderabad which would be the joint Capital for 10 years till the other regions, Rayalaseema and Andhra identify their own.

Undeniably, the Congress decision has nothing to do with the bigness and smallness of Andhra or with national interest but everything to do with crass opportunism, massaging vote-banks and improving its winability quotient. The Party feels it has dealt a masterstroke to checkmate opponents in the 2014 elections. Camouflaged as imperative for "political stability" in the country, Sic.

The Party is hopeful that whatever losses it incurs in Andhra, it would reap big dividends in Telangana provided TRS Chief K Chandrasekhar Rao doesn't backtrack on his word of merging his outfit with the Congress. Of the 42 Lok Sabha and 294 Assembly seats in Andhra, Telangana gets 17 MPs and 119 legislature seats. Also, by carving Rayalaseema it would reduce YSR Congress Jagannathan Reddy's clout and weightage in the region.

Besides, the Congress has a tough task ahead to contain the collateral fallout and assuage the Rayalaseema and Andhra leaders, already 7 MPs, two State Ministers and 7 MLAs have resigned. Making matters worse TRS's Rao extolls people of the two dis-

tricts living in Hyderabad to quit their jobs and make way for Telanganites!

Alongside the Centre has to grapple with the communal fallout of the new State. Given that the reason d'atre Hyderabad is sandwiched between the two warring sides. Currently the Muslim population of Telangana is 4.5% but with Hyderabad the total Muslim population would touch 12.5%. Whereby, small regional outfits like the Hyderabad-based All India Majlis-e-Litthad al-Muslim would become increasing crucial for the ruling dispensation.

But after Telangana, what? Already, over 10 new entrants are rearing to go. BSP's Mayawati

When the Prime Minister goes blue in the face talking of cutting back on costs and austerity drive, we continue to multiply our expenses. Authoritative sources aver that the creation of a State would cost the national exchequer over Rs 1,500 crore. Entailing expenditure on setting up a new State capital, Assembly and Secretariat but excluding the annual recurring expenses.

favours bifurcation of UP--- Harit Pradesh out of Western UP, Bundelkhand and Purvanchal out of south-eastern UP. Leaders in Maharashtra have raised the ante for Vidarbha and Gorkha Mukti Morcha for Gorkhland in West Bengal but both the Trinamool and CPM oppose.

Then there is a demand for Saurashtra in Gujarat, Coorg in Karnataka, Gondwana from portions of Chhattisgarh, Andhra and Madhya Pradesh, Kodagu from Karnataka's coffee belt, Bodoland from Assam, Ladakh and Jammu from Kashmir, Garoland from Meghalaya and Mithilanchal from North Bihar.

Logically, if one district of Assam could be made into a full-fledged State of Nagaland, another into Mizoram, a third into Meghalaya and yet another into Arunachal Pradesh, how can one hold back on Jammu or Vidarbha? RJD's Laloo Yadav's was ever so right when he

warned, "Yeh madhumakhi ka chatha hai, chhedho ge toh pash-taoh ge" over Jharkhand's creation in 2000.

Undeniably, a few States are much too large and unwieldy for efficient governance. It takes nearly two days to get from one end of UP to the other by road! Obviously, administrative efficiency is the first casualty. As the 2000 experience of Uttarakhnd, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, and earlier, of Haryana and Himachal Pradesh, shows, smaller States are able to meet better the rising expectations of their people for speedy development and a responsive and effective administration. Today, all are shining examples of "small is beautiful."

What warranty that it would decrease the ever-rising disparities between the haves and the have-nots which are all the more glaring and difficult to camouflage in small States. Clinging their arguments by asserting that with caste and creed dictating the polity's agenda presently, any fresh redrawing of India's political map would only give monstrous fillip to separatism.

Besides, it may make sound political sense but lousy economics. When the Prime Minister goes blue in the face talking of cutting back on costs and austerity drive, we continue to multiply our expenses. Authoritative sources aver that the creation of a State would cost the national exchequer over Rs 1,500 crore. Entailing expenditure on setting up a new State capital, Assembly and Secretariat but excluding the annual recurring expenses.

In addition, it could well encourage fissiparous tenden-

cies, ultimately leading to India's balkanization and stoke the subterranean smouldering fires of disputes over borders--- and cities. Both Haryana and Punjab still claim Chandigarh. Orissa demands the return of Saraikala and Kharsuan. Nagaland still wants to cut into large chunks of Manipur and certain forest areas of Assam to create Nagalim. Bihar years desperately for the mineral-rich districts of Jharkhand.

Will not a further partition of the existing States result in an India that would fit Jinnah's classical description of Pakistan as being "truncated and moth-eaten"? Remember, the Dar Commission recommended that no new provinces should be formed as India was burdened with problems more urgent than the problem of redistribution of provinces. Such as poverty, food, inflation and production. Grounds which more than hold true today.

The tragic irony is that successive Prime Ministers bought peace at the cost of strong integrated India by carving out new rajyas for acquiring "new cham-chas" and assured vote banks. Unfortunately for the Centre, its policy of going populist and opting for quick-fix remedies has boomeranged.

In the ultimate, the UPA Government needs to learn from old mistakes, diagnose the disease afresh and hammer out solutions for better governance. Much can be achieved through decentralization of administration without adding to the cost of governance through top-heavy ministerial baggage.

Time to stop netas from creating new pocket boroughs motivated by petty personal interests, undermining national unity. Are we now going to roll back history to pre-Independence days and create 562 States? "It will be a folly to ignore realities; facts take their revenge if they are not faced squarely and well", said India's first Home Minister Sardar Patel. Let not history resound to: We learn nothing from history except that we learn nothing from history!!INFA

Chasing transparency in sports

Ashok B Sharma

It is a laudable and a humble effort by a panel headed by Justice Mukul Mudgal to propose a legislation for introducing transparency in the national Olympic committee and national sports federations. But this proposed law is not effective to curb the menace of betting and spot-fixing. The panel has deliberately left it out as the Union Law Ministry has promised to draft a law to deal with spot-fixing.

The draft National Sports Development Bill-2013 has proposed application of the Right to Information Act (RTI) Act to all sport bodies as they are deemed to be public authorities. This is a bold measure for bringing in needed transparency in sports when political parties are baffled with the verdict of the Chief Information Commission bringing them under the ambit of the RTI Act.

However, the proposed Bill has excluded selection of athlete, appointment of coach or trainer, quality of athlete's performance, his or her medical health and injuries suffered, whereabouts and test results of an athlete and information including commercial confidence, trade secrets or IPRs and disclosures of which would harm the competitive position of a third party from the purview of the RTI Act.

The proposed law also has made no attempt to depoliticise sports. It has not debarred politicians from contesting elections to sport bodies, but has capped the age eligibility for holding office at 70 years. A person against whom criminal charges have been framed under Section 228 of the Criminal Procedure Code will be ineligible to contest elections to national Olympic committee or national sports federations.

A sports minister and officials in the sports ministry and Sports Authority of India will not be able to contest elections. An officer bearer in one national sports federation will not be eligible to hold post of an officer bearer in another national sports federation.

A person who has served as an officer bearer in the executive body for two consecutive terms will not be eligible to contest election. However this provision will not apply in case of the office of the President for which the eligibility to contest would be relaxed to allow those who remained as officer bearers for three consecutive terms in the executive body. Setting of a Sports Election Commission to conduct elections has been proposed.

The proposed Bill has stipulated 25 per cent representation of athletes in the executive body with voting rights. But this representation is too small and should be raised to at least 51 per cent. The new law further says that athletes nominated by the athletes commission will be included in the decision making process of the executive body. Representation of either gender should not be less than 10 per cent of the membership in the general body.

All federations seeking direct or indirect funding need to be accredited by the Government. There will be only one accredited body for each sport. Certificate of accreditation cannot be suspended or cancelled by the Government without ratification from Appellate Sports Tribunal.

The proposed law has urged for setting up of ethics commission, athletes commission in national sports bodies. An Appellate Sports Tribunal is proposed to be set up with selection committee consisting Chief Justice of India or his or her nominee judge, sports secretary and president of National Olympic Committee. Appellate Sports Tribunal will not adjudicate on disputes relating to Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, Asian Games or other international events.

The national federations shall be responsible for preventing age fraud and doping. The proposed Bill has tried to bring in more transparency in sports. But a greater evil still remains to be tackled. Betting and spot fixing scandal have rocked the sport world in general and cricket in particular. It is unfortunate that despite the existence of multiple laws in the country, this heinous crime goes on unabated. Viewers' appreciation and confidence in the game are on the wane as reports of match fixing come in.

Rampant illegal gambling has led to serious crimes like spot fixing or match fixing. The use of modern technologies like the internet and mobile phones have facilitated the work of bookies and even extended their reach beyond the borders. But this does not mean that this menace cannot be controlled. Terrorists use most sophisticated modern technologies and there are conscious efforts to track down the activities of terrorists and bring them to justice.

Apart from the Public Gambling Act, 1867, the Information Technology Act 2000 as amended in May 2011 has placed the responsibility on internet service providers (ISPs) to impose on all subscribers terms of use which prohibit the transmission, posting or up loading of any content which 'encourage money laundering or gambling or is otherwise unlawful in any manner whatsoever.' The law also imposes an obligation to remove and disable such content once they have actual knowledge of its existence.

The Information and Technology Act has been legislated on basis of the Union List vide Entry 31 of the Constitution which gives the Central Government the power to legislate on subjects like posts and telegraph, telephones, wireless, broadcasting and other forms of communications.

Existing laws in the country are sufficient enough to deal with the menace of betting and match fixing. Both the Central and the State Governments have the responsibility of strictly implementing these laws to root out the menace. Central Government is empowered under Entry 42 (Union List) under Constitution to restrict these illegal activities relating to inter-state trade and commerce.

The Union Law Minister Kapil Sibal has said that he would table a new legislation in Parliament seeking to address the evils of betting and spot fixing in sports. It is would be good if the new legislation would seek to plug the loopholes in the existing laws. But nation cannot wait for long till the new legislation is enacted. People of this country want this menace to be nipped in the bud as early as possible.

The United States faces some of the same structural legal issues as India in balancing the interests of the federal and state governments. As federal legislation in US proved ineffective in checking betting on poker or casino games, new legislation - Unlawful Internet Gambling Enforcement Act 2006 - was promulgated effectively prohibiting all forms of remote gambling. Sibal's proposed new legislation should likewise aim at plugging loopholes in the existing laws in a manner to make gambling and spot fixing in sports totally ineffective.

Sports and games need patronage of the Government and business houses. But this does not mean that it should be commercialized to an extent, which would endanger its sanctity. There is a need to nip the spot fixing and gambling in sports in the bud. The multi-crore scam in hosting of Commonwealth Games 2010 has damaged the reputation of sports and games. Added to this was the incidences of de-recognition of several national sports and games federations in the country for not adhering to the international norms. Hopes are there that after enactment of this proposed law things would move in right direction. The Mudgal panel has done its best and it now remains with the Union Law Ministry to draft a law for weeding out betting and spot fixing in sports. (IPA)

Rural posting of doctors

Pratik Deb

The medical students of the country took to the street last month in the capital of the nation against the impending imposition of rural posting upon them. The Medical Council of India, the governing body of the medical education of the nation, is yet to make this official and already the ire, the uncertainty and the precariousness of the medical students of the country along with the rest of the medical community is being vociferated against the forthcoming mandate that would compel the MBBS pass outs to work in a rural centre for a year in order to be deemed as eligible to pursue higher study and specialisation. The decision itself is somewhat consistent considering the path the Government was willing to take for last decade or so, when they initially proposed a separate three and a half year course of medical training for a band of health care workers who would be stationed in the rural part of the country to specifically provide health care to the populace of the hinterlands. Though that plan could not take shape as the Supreme Court ruled against it, the method of deliberation on the part of the Government seems to be remaining same: putting a health care work-force on the rural sphere be it somewhat untrained or inexperienced.

Without fearing to sound like a naive idealist, let us see what is wrong with this proposition. First of all, just like its predecessor's attempt of putting semi-qualified individuals in the helm of affairs

in the rural settings, the government, once again, seems to be not moving further from their original assumptions: the health care of rural areas does not require the same expertise as that in the urban realm. Even if we overlook the utterly undemocratic essence that this assumption transpires, we have to accept and admit that the truth is quite the contrary. In rural settings, when a physician is entrusted upon with general practice and is expected to diag-



nose diseases without the aid of a USG or X-ray or laboratory tests that was more or less routine in the tertiary health care centre where he was taught and trained, he needs to have more clinical experience than that a one year rotational internship at the end of his study provides. Contrary to what the common notion is, general medical practice is not trite, rather it is the backbone of any efficacious health care system. True we have not 'specialised' it the way the first world did in the form of family medicine, but that does not render it insignificant.

By making the rural service mandatory, the government renders it off-putting. While the rural posting was never meant to be sounding as if a persecution, a very little was done on the part of almost all the state governments throughout India to ensure the rural community a healthy infrastructure on the first place. Currently most of the rural postings for the doctors take place on ad hoc basis (by National Rural Health Mission) as temporary

job without any job security or future benefit. How can a government eradicating job security off its doctors even in the governmental sphere expect better commitment of them? Working on the infrastructure and increasing incentives for the rural posting works wonder in alleviating the so-called apathy of the doctors to go to rural settings: Gujarat provided a perfect example of that.

So the only ground of such a decision on the part of the government can be found in the argument of pragmatism. But let us ask ourselves, is it the only thing that could have been done? Is it

the best alternative that is at hand to improve the health care of the rural populace? And the answers, to both the cases are: a resounding no. The path towards a holistic and wholesome health-care system in the rural section of the country is not a mandatory one year service of the fledgling health care professionals who would rather see this as a condemnation rather than an opportunity to work for the people or to learn. Putting the rural health service in the map of one's career as a purgatory that one must bear with for a year in order to return to the heaven to super-specialized posh hospitals of the urban regions is neither a vigorous nor an ethical measure. Hopefully it won't be too late to confront that inconvenient truth. Rather, a sincere attempt is required to equilibrate the inequity present in the urban to rural ratio of health centers and infrastructure.

The dissonance between the urban to rural population and their representation in the medical student community is worsening every year. The burden of technology and investigation is augmenting while the reliance on good old clinical skills is being marginalized in the medical education by each passing moment. Unless a health care system can be bolstered keeping all these conditions in mind, it would be hard if not impossible to see the forthcoming step as anything more than an eyewash on the part of a government reluctant to take the matter of the health of its own people seriously. (IPA)

A wake up call

Sir,

This has reference to the suspension of young IAS officer, Durga Shakti Nagpal by UP Govt. It is painfully and regretfully noted that the suspension orders have been passed on the ruse that the victim got razed to the ground, a wall of a place of worship belonging to a particular community reportedly built on an unauthorised piece of land, without getting the matter verified through a fair and quick probe. In the present scenario, the system of governance appears to have developed a knack of treating such incidents with utmost neglect and casually deflecting them as ammo to be used for triggering the communal hatred and disharmony.

It has been noticed on more than one occasion that such officers charting on course to take the tough call on ferocious goons are just discarded as misfits and purged from the significantly challenging assignments. In view of this political masters, beaten track followers in bureaucracy, legal luminaries, human right champions, social activists, heads of NGOs, change

mongers and the intellectuals owe an accountability and greater share of responsibility to the suffering masses, who are facing the major brunt in real life due to criminal apathy and gross misconduct of the so called elected representatives of the people. The million dollar question is as to why all such persons have reduced themselves to the status of mere mute spectators? An honest young officer wedded to her official duty, showing courage to pounce upon the mafia monsters engaged in eating the nation's economic edifice from the roots like termites is suspended in double quick speed for being dutiful and upright but the Nation takes no notice. This doesn't augur well for the country. The incident may be dubbed as trivial one and insignificant by the corrupt and immoral politicians but it has comprehensively exposed their unethical style of governance. This is a wake up call for the Indian youth and alarm bell for all others at the receiving end.

Yours etc.....
P C Sharma
Trikuta Nagar

Plight of Indian prisoners

Sir,

This has reference to the news item 'Secret letter exposes Pak barbarism on jail inmates' DE Aug 3. The letter signed by 11 Indian prisoners in Kot Lakhpat Rai jail reveals their miserable condition. They are being treated worse than animals and are living in sub-human conditions. It was expected that after the killing of Sarabjit Singh in that jail things would change for better for Indian prisoners. But nothing has changed, nor will their lot change ever in the future unless the Government of India and world human rights bodies put pressure on Pak Government to improve their lot.

The letter exposes the hollow claims of the Pak jail authorities that Indian prisoners are safe and sound. It reveals the dark side of jail authorities who are bent on making life difficult for these prisoners. The Government of India should take the matter with Pakistan at diplomatic level and convey our concern over this sensitive issue.

Otherwise, there will be many more Sarabjits.
Yours etc.....
Sukhwinder Singh
Dhar Road, Udhampur

Readers Write No scope for mediation

Sir,

Refer news item, No brokering on Kashmir, 'US.' There is no need to meddle into the Indo-Pak affairs as far as Kashmir is concerned. Time and again, India has made it clear to foreign countries to keep off Kashmir issue, as it is an internal matter of the country.

If any problem exists between India and Pakistan over the issue, the two countries can solve it between them. There is no scope for the third party to get entangled into it. It requires political will and honesty to get the issue resolved.

India has taken some Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) with Pakistan to normalise relations. But because of hawkish policy adopted by some anti-India elements, the Government of Pakistan finds itself handicapped to reciprocate the goodwill gesture. Besides, it is in the interest of both the countries to resolve any issue between them bilaterally. The third party mediation has only complicated problems rather than solving them.

There would have been no Kashmir issue today, had India not taken it to the UN at that time.

Yours etc.....
Sunil Anand
Udhampur