

13 EXPLAINED



SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

When I left Conference Room for short meetings with Japan and other countries, I asked Ivanka to hold seat. Very standard. Angela M agrees! If Chelsea Clinton were asked to hold the seat for her mother, as her mother gave our country away, the Fake News would say CHELSEA FOR PRES!

DONALD TRUMP, 33.6 million followers, on criticism of Ivanka Trump attending a G20 meeting

How 'economic complexity' translates into diversified trade and faster growth

Economic pole of global growth has moved from China to India, shows Harvard research. Why do some countries grow faster than others?



SIMPLY PUT
By P VAIDYANATHAN IYER

EXPRESS EDITORS INTERPRET

ON JUNE 28, the Centre for International Development (CID), a research hub at Harvard University, projected that the economic pole of global growth has, over the past few years, moved from China to India. The projection was based on the path traversed and progress made by countries in expanding and diversifying their export basket over the years. It captures the accumulation of new capabilities by countries which allow for more diverse and complex production. The latest update to *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*, based on 2015 global trade data, also ranked 124 countries on an Economic Complexity Index, which could be used by investors, among others, to make growth projections.

According to the new Economic Complexity Index rankings, India is at number 48, having moved up two places from its 2014 position. China is still far ahead at 26, but has fallen six places in the latest rankings. Japan has led the chart every year from 1995 to 2015, the period for which the rankings are available. The United States ranked 10 in 2015, up from 14 in 2014, and from 11 and 12 in 2013 and 2012 respectively.

India and the African country of Uganda top the list of fastest growing economies leading up to 2025. Both countries are projected to grow at 7.7% annually. China's annual growth rate is projected to be 4.4% leading up to 2025.

The Atlas of Economic Complexity

Economists and other academics have spent years trying to understand the dynamics of growth. It has gone much beyond the factors of production — land, labour, capital and education/skills. Why some countries grow faster than others is no longer easily explained by the pace of economic reforms, governance, education standards of people, or their skill sets. Not that these do not matter, but despite similar characteristics, some countries have turned more prosperous than others.

Ricardo Hausmann, Professor of the Practice of Economic Development at Harvard Kennedy School and Director, CID, and Cesar A Hidalgo, who leads the Collective Learning Group at MIT Media Lab, have for years studied global trade trends to assess the capabilities of countries. Their research links the ability of countries to acquire and assimilate "knowhow", and their diversification into other areas of production. Countries that are able to do so can potentially grow faster, they say.

Their research was published as a book, *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*, in June 2011, with a new edition in 2014. The Atlas itself is an online tool that allows a deep dive into the trade trends of countries in terms of their imports and exports, and how they have diversified or shrunk over the years. Such trends throw light on the nature of in-

dustries that may emerge in the countries in the future.

Trade and Complexity

Prof Hausmann sees a strong correlation between a country's ability to diversify its product portfolio and its ability to gather the knowhow to put together a complex final product, which may require a mix of parts and components. The American aerospace company Boeing, for example, has a host of suppliers from small and big firms spread across the world. The aircraft may be assembled in the US, but its components come from countries including Canada, Australia, Japan, South Korea, Italy, France and the United Kingdom. Hausmann's mantra for growth is to develop the capability to make different forms of knowhow collaborate — it's the collective of knowhow that will hold the key to producing complex products. The iPhone is another example.

But how do we measure knowhow? Here, Prof Hausmann talks of graduating into products that require more "personbytes" — one personbyte being the quantum of knowledge an individual possesses. And how do we grow knowhow?

It's a 'chicken and egg' situation — a difficult task, Hausmann says. Knowhow is slow moving. A country has to grow its letters, or personbytes. The more letters you have in Scrabble, the more words you can build. You can build your word bank by using letters similar to the letters that you already have. In other words, countries can diversify into related industries once they have acquired specialisation in one. A country has to aggregate personbytes to create different products, or diversify.

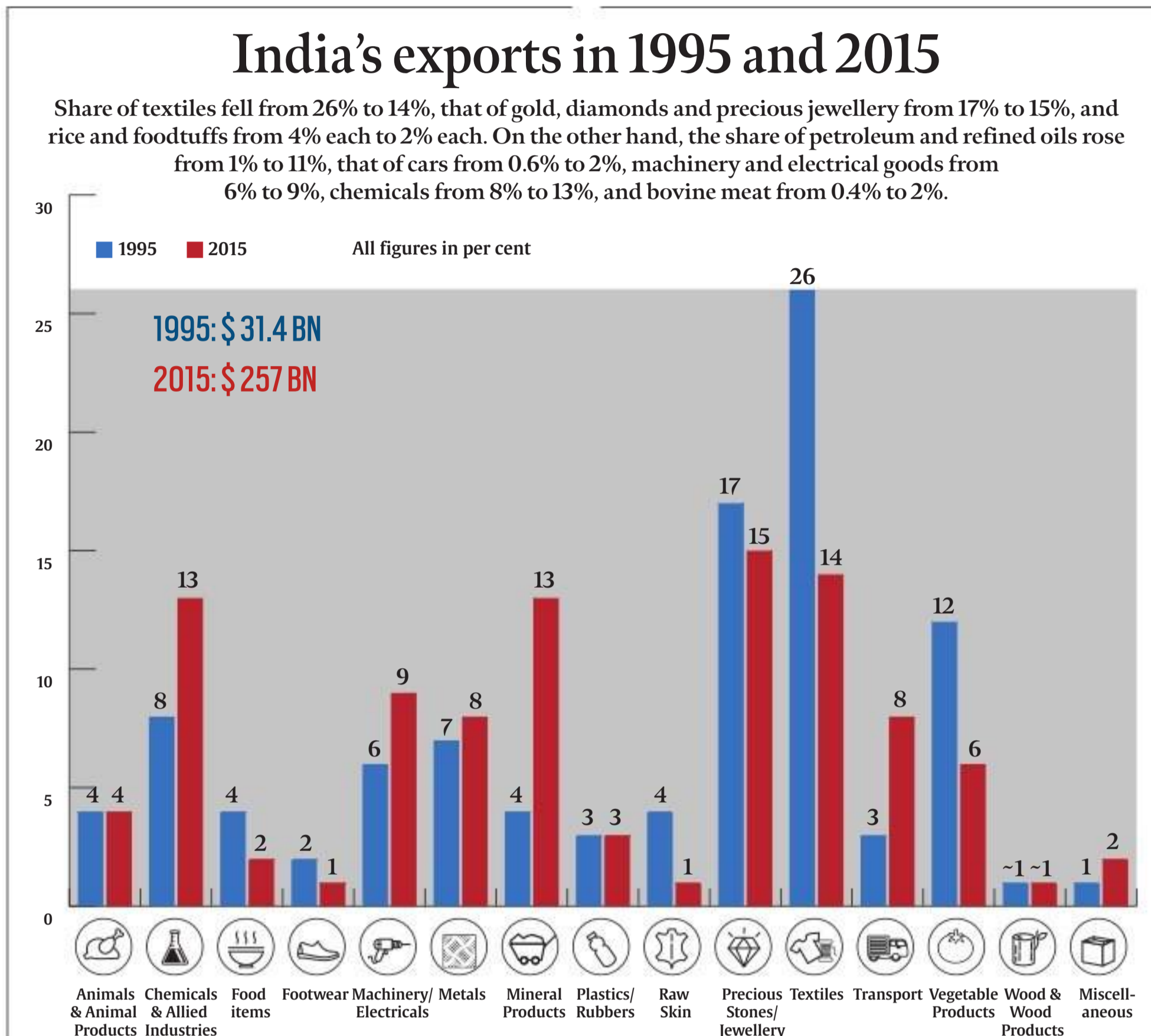
Future Gazing: India's Personbytes

India is the fastest growing economy in the world today. But its share in total merchandise exports is still minuscule at less than 2%. Total exports in 2016-17 were \$ 274.64 billion, up 4.7% in dollar terms. Hausmann's *The Atlas of Economic Complexity* does not include services exports; maybe for countries like India this may turn out to be favourable, and mean a better rank in the Index. Over the last 20 years, India's export basket has diversified, but progress continues to be slow. In the five years leading to 2015, the percentage share of the top 10 commodities exported from India dropped to 58% from 60%, according to a study published by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry, an industry body, in August 2016. (The higher the percentage, the less diversified a country's exports.)

These numbers only confirm Prof Hausmann's theory and research that says knowhow accumulation is slow-moving. Also, knowhow is difficult to transfer. The latest update to the Economic Complexity Index shows that India is well positioned to continue diversifying into new areas, which include complex sectors such as vehicles, chemicals and certain electronics. India exports 395 products with revealed comparative advantage (meaning that its share of global exports is larger than what would be expected from the size of its export economy, and from the size of a product's global market).

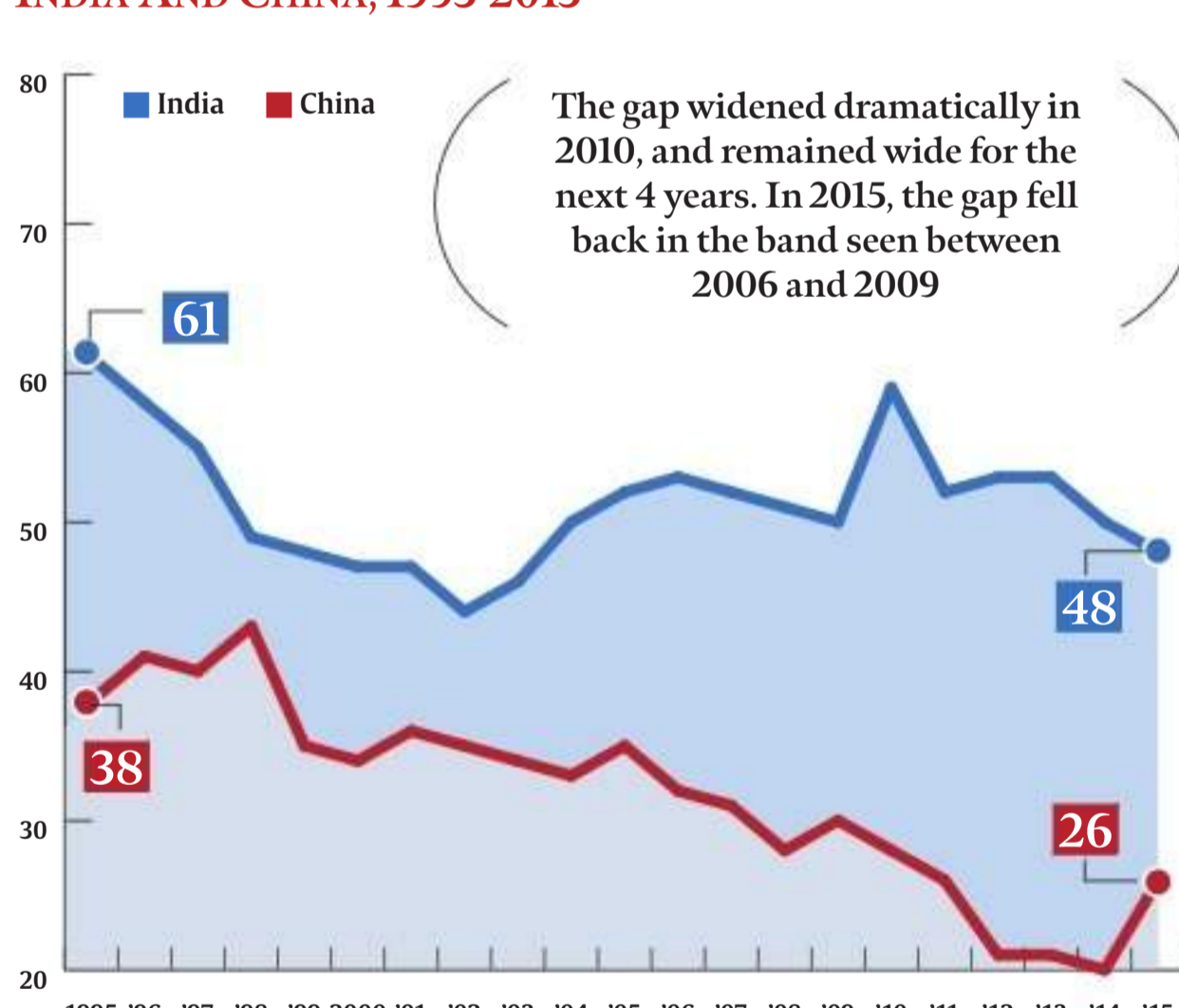
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(P Vaidyanathan Iyer, on sabbatical from *The Indian Express*, is Edward Mason Fellow at Harvard Kennedy School)



Prof Ricardo Hausmann, Director of the Centre for International Development and Professor of the Practice of Economic Development at Harvard.

ECONOMIC COMPLEXITY INDEX RANKING INDIA AND CHINA, 1995-2015

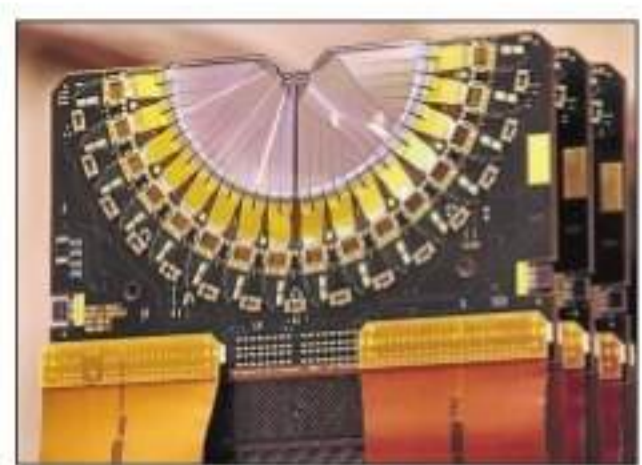


Source: *The Atlas of Economic Complexity*. The Atlas is available online.

COUNTRY RANKINGS, 2015

Based on economic complexity for a given year

Rank	Country	Change
1	Japan	—
2	Switzerland	—
3	Germany	—
4	South Korea	—
5	Austria	—
6	Sweden	—
7	Czech Republic	—
8	Hungary	▲1
9	Singapore	▲1
10	United States	▲4
12	United Kingdom	—
20	Israel	▲3
26	China	▼6
45	Russia	▲6
47	Brazil	▲5
48	India	▲2
64	South Africa	▼6
77	Australia	—
80	Uganda	▲3
81	Sri Lanka	▼8
100	Pakistan	▼5
117	Bangladesh	▼11
120	Congo	▼18
121	Sudan	—
122	Guinea	▲1
123	Papua New Guinea	▼7
124	Nigeria	—



The Vertex Locator detector is part of an experiment at CERN's Large Hadron Collider that discovered a particle that contains two charm quarks. CERN

How Collider at CERN found the predicted double dose of charm

KENNETH CHANG

PHYSICISTS HAVE discovered a particle that is doubly charming.

Researchers reported last week that in debris flying out from the collisions of protons at the CERN particle physics laboratory, they had spotted a particle that has long been predicted but not detected until now.

The new particle, known as Xi-cc++, could provide new insight into how tiny particles known as quarks, the building blocks of protons and neutrons, interact with each other.

Protons and neutrons, which account for the bulk of ordinary matter, are made of two types of quarks: up and down. A proton consists of two up quarks and one down quark; a neutron, one up quark and two down quarks. These triplets of quarks are known as baryons.

There are also heavier quarks with even quirkier names — strange, charm, top, bottom — and baryons containing permutations of heavier quarks also exist.

An experiment at CERN, within the Large Hadron Collider, counted more 300 Xi-cc++ baryons, each consisting of two heavy charm quarks and one up quark.

The discovery fits with the Standard Model, the prevailing understanding of how the smallest bits of the universe behave, and does not seem to point to new physics. "The existence of these particles has been predicted by the Standard Model," said Patrick Spradlin, a physicist at the University of Glasgow who led the research.

Up and down quarks have almost the same mass, so in protons and neutrons, the three quarks swirl around each other in an almost uniform pattern. In the new particle, the up quark circulates around the two heavy charm quarks at the centre. "You get something far more like an atom," Dr Spradlin said.

Quark interactions are complex and difficult to calculate, and the structure of the new particles will enable physicists to check the assumptions and approximations they use in their calculations. "It's a new regime in quark-quark dynamics," said Jonathan L. Rosner, a retired theoretical physicist at the University of Chicago.

The mass of the Xi-cc++ is about 3.8 times that of a proton. The particle is not stable. Dr Spradlin said the scientists had not yet figured out its lifetime precisely, but it falls apart after somewhere between 50 millionths of a billionth of a second and 1,000 millionths of a billionth of a second.

For Dr Rosner, the CERN results appear to match predictions that he and Marek Karliner of Tel Aviv University made. What is less clear is how the new particle fits in with findings from 2002, when physicists working at Fermilab outside Chicago made the first claim of a doubly charmed baryon, one consisting of two charm quarks plus a down quark (instead of the up quark seen in the CERN experiment).

Peter S Cooper, a spokesman for the Fermilab experiment, said the CERN researchers "definitely have something"; however, the Fermilab findings still stood, too — even though the two results did not readily make sense together.

THE NYT

'Parents' education could be an alternative quota criterion'

ANWESH PATNAIK

NEW DELHI, JULY 10

IN 2008, Parliament passed the Central Educational Institutions (Reservations in Admissions) Amendment Bill, stipulating 27% reservation for OBCs in public-funded institutions of higher education. Since then, the question of whether the quota over- or under-represents the share of OBCs, and that of the inclusion of certain castes in OBC lists across states, have frequently arisen. The unsettled issue of eligibility has fuelled agitations by Jats in Rajasthan (the latest round was called off on June 24 after government assurances) and Haryana; Marathas, Patidars and Kapus, and led to interventions by courts.

And yet, there has been no in-depth assessment of the real efficacy of affirmative action in securing educational opportunities for society's marginalised sections. A recent attempt by Rakesh Basant of IIM-Ahmedabad and Gitanjali Sen of Shiv Nadar University to evaluate the tangible impact of the 2008 law found that the participation rates of OBCs in higher education has increased, but this increase has not been commensurate with the increase in participation rates for the general population. The authors tested two hypotheses: first, that enrolment of eligible OBCs in higher ed-

ucation would grow faster than that of the 'general' group; second, that the growth in OBC enrolment would be highest in states with the least history of affirmative action.

To test the first hypothesis, the study computed the differences in enrolment between the younger (18-23 yrs) and older (24-29 yrs) age groups for eligible OBCs, and compared this with the similar difference for the general group, with the expectation that the former would be greater. Data were sourced from the NSS 68th Round, consolidated in 2011-12. The younger age group thus reflected the section of the eligible OBCs impacted by the Bill, vis-à-vis the unaffected older group. Empirical analysis showed that the enrolment rate for eligible OBCs is still behind the general population.

According to the second hypothesis, eastern and north-eastern states, which have virtually no history of affirmative action, should exhibit a bigger margin between enrolment rates for OBCs versus the general population, due to the 2008 law. The study found that general enrolment rates overtook that of OBCs everywhere except the east; however, the margin for OBCs over the general population in the east was not statistically significant.

In an interview, Rakesh Basant, lead author of the study, discussed the way forward for education policy in India.



PAPER CLIP

FLAGGING INTERESTING RESEARCH

RETHINKING RESERVATIONS

Impact of Affirmative Action in Higher Education for the Other Backward Classes in India, IIM-A WP No. 2016-07-01: Rakesh Basant and Gitanjali Sen

Why do you believe quotas have been ineffective in securing educational opportunities for OBCs?

As our paper says, the time elapsed between the implementation of quota and the time of analysis is quite short. The impact, if positive, may take time. The immediate impact can be on those who are eligible to go to college — those who have crossed the school



RAKESH BASANT

Professor of Economics, IIM-A

What are the implications of your

findings for education policy?

The implications are somewhat similar for all marginalised groups. Data show that deficits in participation in higher education decline when we look at those cohorts of people who are eligible to go to college. If the marginalised do not have decent access to school education, they will not become eligible to go to college. Non-availability of school infrastructure is critical before affirmative action in higher education can become effective. The assumption that affirmative action will create the incentives for the marginalised to cross the school threshold in the absence of accessible school infrastructure is misplaced. The focus should probably shift to the supply side; access, both for school and higher education infrastructure, needs to be enhanced.

So, should the focus be on primary and secondary education, rather than on tertiary education?

Yes, that will enhance eligibility for higher education. At the same time, one needs to enhance availability of good quality higher education institutions.

You have suggested elsewhere a shift in the criterion for reservation from caste to parental education. Do you think that

will help communities that face discrimination due to their socio-cultural identity?

I wish to emphasise that I am not sure if reservation is the most appropriate form of affirmative action. But if we wish to continue with this form of affirmative action, parental education is an alternative worth thinking about as it is relatively easier to measure, and is self-limiting. Parental education is quite low among marginalised caste/community groups. Moreover, such a focus, though not constitutionally valid today, will shift the political discourse in a different direction.

In light of the evidence, do you think the government should continue with OBC reservations in higher education?

That is for the government to decide. A large number of factors go into that decision. The limited analysis we have done suggests that the efficacy of such a policy would be quite limited if school infrastructure is not improved and other complementary inputs are not available to the marginalised to benefit from affirmative action.

(Anwesh Patnaik, a Young India Fellow at Ashoka University and a student of sociology at Delhi School of Economics, is a summer intern with *The Indian Express*)

The Indian EXPRESS

FOUNDED BY

RAMNATH GOENKA

BECAUSE THE TRUTH INVOLVES US ALL

Marriage made on earth

In the backdrop of the Israeli-Indian alliance are realities of occupation, suppression and misery



RAJMOHAN GANDHI

TRIUMPH IN MOSUL

Iraq announces victory over IS in the city, but getting the country back on its feet will be hard. Bigger battles lie ahead

ALMOST EXACTLY THREE years after the Islamic State or Daesh captured Mosul, the biggest urban centre of their “caliphate”, the city has been liberated by Iraqi forces. For Daesh, the loss of Mosul cannot be understated. It was the capture of Mosul, a city of 1.5 million people, the second largest in Baghdad, more than anything else, that established the IS as a force to reckon with. It was an ideology that was in occupation of a territory. From the city’s 12th century Grand al-Nuri mosque in Mosul’s old city, now in ruins, Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi declared the caliphate. From Mosul, the IS traded in oil with neighbouring countries and used terror to rule over local populations. The IS flag has now been taken down from the mosque, and the Iraqi flag flutters on the bank of the River Tigris. Al-Baghdadi, too, is almost certainly dead. During the nine-month battle, a US-led international coalition conducted air strikes and assisted Iraqi forces, while the Iraqi Army’s Counterterrorism Service led the battle on the ground, losing over a 1,000 men according to one estimate. In Iraq, the IS does not occupy any significant territory anymore, but is still present in pockets and could resort to terrorist attacks. Outside the country, IS still holds the city of Raqqa in Syria, its de facto capital, though much smaller than Mosul.

But there is a bigger battle to be fought against the IS, one that has to be waged worldwide, to win back minds lost to its toxic interpretation of Islam. There are IS franchisees across the world, and with the group’s most significant territorial possession gone, these operatives, who work either as lone wolves or in small bands, will be looking to avenge the Mosul defeat. From France to Germany, Belgium to the UK, several in the wave of terror attacks in Europe have been directly claimed by the IS or it has claimed to have influenced the perpetrators. Indonesia recently said 1,200 IS fighters are in the Philippines, and 40 of them are Indonesian. In India, the NIA has tracked and arrested some 50 IS recruits since 2014, including those who returned from Iraq after spending time with the group. The estimates of other Indian youth brainwashed by the IS varies from about a few dozen to a couple of hundred. All this underlines the challenge ahead.

In Iraq itself, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi’s primary focus should be an offer of credible power-sharing and reconciliation with the country’s Sunni population, politically marginalised since the 2003 US military ouster of Saddam Hussein, who readily welcomed the IS, at first as protection against a sectarian-minded Shi’ite centre. The task of physical reconstruction of the liberated areas is massive, but has to be carried out if normalcy is to return. India must play its part in the international effort to help Iraq get back on its feet.

MISSING IN HAMBURG

G-20 summit did not provide a roadmap to deal with challenges created by US withdrawal from the Paris Pact

AT THE G-20 summit in Hamburg, Germany, the US was isolated by the 19 other members of group who decided to push ahead with the Paris Climate Change Pact. The communique issued at the end of the two-day meet on July 8 “re-affirmed the group’s commitment to the pact”. US President Donald Trump, who had pulled his country out of the Paris Pact last month, did manage to have a reference to fossil fuels inserted in the summit’s final statement. But the rebuke to America was complete when its proposal to “work closely with other countries to help them access and use fossil fuels more cleanly and efficiently,” was boxed into one paragraph of the final communique, which stressed on “affordable, reliable, sustainable and low greenhouse gas energy systems”.

Almost immediately after the US ditched the Paris Climate Change Agreement, most of the pact’s other signatories had closed ranks. Indonesia and Saudi Arabia, which were reportedly considering diluting their commitment after the American withdrawal, reiterated their support to the deal at Hamburg. But other than a show of strength, the global response to the challenges created by the US’ departure from the climate compact has, at best, been tentative. The Hamburg Summit did not mark a significant departure in this respect. The Climate and Energy Action Plan for Growth, released at the end of the summit, does not have a roadmap to negotiate one of the most fraught aspects of global climate talks: Climate finance. It does talk of involving multilateral development banks and industry to fund low-carbon initiatives. But the plan has nothing to fill in the void created by US withdrawal from the Paris compact. At Paris, the US had committed to paying \$3 billion to a corpus to fund climate change mitigation efforts in developing countries. Before renegeing on the pact, it paid \$1 billion. The Hamburg plan does not talk of ways to deal with this \$2 billion shortfall.

The backtracking by the US from the Paris Pact would require other countries to raise their climate change mitigation ambitions. But the developed countries within the G 20 have a mixed record in this respect. The power sector in Australia remains heavily coal-dominated. Canada has scaled up its renewables target, but oil extraction from tar sands is adding to the country’s carbon footprint. Germany, the strongest critic of the US at the Hamburg Summit, and the world leader in renewables, has announced that it will make “climate action a key focus of the G 20 Presidency,” which runs until November 30 next year. Its stewardship will be keenly watched.

DISHING IT OUT

Air India’s decision to serve only vegetarian meals to economy class shows a disdain for its patrons

THE CUSTOMER IS always right. Unless, of course, she or he happens to be a non-vegetarian who cannot afford a business class or executive class ticket on an Air India flight. Since last month, India’s ailing national carrier has been serving only vegetarian meals to economy class passengers on all domestic routes. The policy was first implemented in a limited manner last year with non-vegetarian meals being taken off domestic flights less than 90 minutes long. The reasoning behind Air India’s decision appears problematic on various counts and shows a disdain for the dietary choices of a significant number of its consumers.

One of the reasons given by Air India for the move is that it will save the company about Rs 8 crore per year. Given that its debt is a whopping Rs 52,000 crore, the sum saved on chicken dinners is hardly likely to turn the company around. More importantly, in the competitive commercial airline space, Air India stands to annoy — if not completely alienate — its customers, about 30 per cent of whom opt for non-veg meals. But far more problematic than its linear economic rationale are Air India’s ideas on how it values its customers. The possibility of a “mix up”, with vegetarian patrons being served the wrong meal, has been used as an excuse. Why an error on the part of cabin staff, who serve meals, should warrant forced vegetarianism remains a mystery. It also betrays a puritanical privileging of vegetarianism that has become a marked feature of India’s public life in recent times.

The policy has not been extended to those who can afford a better seat. If segregated food can upset vegetarians in economy, surely the same holds true for business class patrons. And if it makes better financial sense to go *shakahari*, the accounting should hold up for international routes too. But perhaps Air India has taken Renee Zellweger’s words in *Jerry Maguire* to heart: “First class used to be a better meal. Now it’s a better life.”

TWO THINGS I cannot banish easily from my mind: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s remark that the marriage between Israel and India was made in heaven, and an article on Shylock in the latest *New Yorker*.

Stephen Greenblatt, the article’s author, teaches at Harvard but learnt his English literature at Yale, where in 1961 he was denied a research assistantship for being a Jew. Orally telling the 18-year-old that Yale’s Jewish students were genetically programmed to “wheedle” money out of the university, a financial-aid officer rejected his application.

Goaded by the slur-soaked rebuff, Greenblatt went on to become one of the world’s best-known literature scholars and a student also of ethnic and religious apartheid. His *New Yorker* article brings to life the segregated Venice of the period when Shakespeare was alive. It also touches on the cruelties that Europe’s Jews faced in preceding and succeeding centuries.

I must not steal from the article. Those who can access it will obtain a brilliant analysis of Shylock and of how Shakespeare’s immortal character found a life beyond what the playwright may have intended, and beyond what *The Merchant of Venice* plot required.

Pointing out, moreover, that some Christian writers in 17th century-Europe articulated the misery of victimised Jews, Greenblatt also acknowledges that today “other ethnic groups and religions have replaced Jews as the focus” of the sort of hostility he ran into in 1961.

The story of today’s Israel is wider than that of Netanyahu, but most in India are unaware of that width. Not many know that American as well as Israeli Jews are among the sharpest critics of Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories. Or that Israel’s oldest

newspaper, *Haaretz*, is relentless in its exposure of Arab hardships in Israel and in the “Palestinian territory”, where Israeli settlements have taken over the highest and best lands, in the process almost halving the Palestinian area.

A recent *Haaretz* issue underlines the inhumanity, illegality and difficulty in the Israeli attempt to convert Jerusalem, the eastern half of which was captured by Israel in 1967, into a homogeneous Jewish city. Despite new (and internationally unlawful) Jewish settlements in East Jerusalem and the decay of the city’s Arab sectors, nearly 30 per cent in Jerusalem are Arabs, who, however, are not permitted to vote for the Knesset (the Israeli parliament), unlike Arabs in other parts of Israel, who vote.

Given such realities, the notion of a heaven-made Israeli-Indian alliance sticks in one’s throat. A down-to-earth partnership between Indian and Israeli citizens loyal to human dignity would be better, if also more courageous. And one asks if drones and other purchases would require India’s silence on the question of Israel’s treatment of Israeli and Palestinian Arabs.

Even Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who signed numerous MoUs in Israel and was the first Indian leader to give Palestine a miss while visiting the area, refrained from saying that India would recognise Jerusalem as an exclusively Israeli or Jewish city, or that India’s embassy in Israel would be shifted to Jerusalem, for centuries sacred to Jews, Christians and Muslims. The world is not yet so “pragmatic” as to produce a musical of an Israeli-Indian romance where a screen of roses and an anti-terrorist wall combine to hide the realities of occupation, suppression and misery.

Tragically, terrorism is part of the real world that Jews and Arabs inhabit in Israel,

Palestine and the neighbourhood, as it is part of real worlds elsewhere. But it was not wholly absent in other freedom movements that we honour. Historians can point to periods in the 20th century when “terrorism” was a nice word in the vocabulary of Hindu nationalists in India and Jewish nationalists in Israel.

Disharmony among Palestinian leaders is also another unhelpful reality. Still, some Arabs and Jews work together to seek nonviolent solutions for the Palestine/Israel question, even if their impact is not as loud as we might like. The security that walls, drones and missiles provide for Israel from one tense day to the next cannot match the security that can come if its Arab neighbours choose to become Israel’s friends.

A pipe dream? Even if it is, I wish Prime Minister Modi had given expression to something like it while he was there. Even within India, what future is there if we conclude that bitterness between divided neighbours is an unalterable and permanent reality? Doesn’t every family find out that putting hurtful incidents to one side is the only way to go forward?

In any case, India becoming a major power will not excite the world unless India’s voice is raised in favour of reconciliation and justice, which are two sides of a single coin.

Utopian? Perhaps. On the other hand, what would you call an Indo-Israeli honeymoon on a magic carpet that floats above dispossessed and ordered-about Palestinians? To me that would be a disgraceful betrayal of those in whose laps we were raised. Even worse, it would be a slamming down of our consciences.

The writer is a historian. His latest work is *Why Gandhi still matters?*

What would you call an Indo-Israeli honeymoon on a magic carpet that floats above dispossessed and ordered-about Palestinians? To me that would be a disgraceful betrayal of those in whose laps we were raised. Even worse, it would be a slamming down of our consciences.



VINAY SITAPATI

IN 1989, PRIME MINISTER Rajiv Gandhi decided that the time had come for India to build a nuclear weapon. Our secretive nuclear programme was then entirely run by scientists. Since politicians come and go, Rajiv realised he needed one outsider to continually oversee the programme, regardless of which prime minister was in power. After some thought, Rajiv summoned the then defence secretary — a man who could, in the words of a scientist running the programme, “keep his mouth shut”.

From then on Naresh Chandra, who died on Sunday, served as the chairman of the nuclear weapons committee — one so secret that no record exists of it within government. Even prime ministers would not be fully briefed, but the scientists — R. Chidambaram, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, V.S. Arunachalam — were duty bound to keep Chandra in the loop. Chandra would climb down bunkers to check plutonium stock himself. With little political oversight, he was the keeper of the flame. In 1998, when Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee decided to test nuclear weapons, Naresh Chandra was conveniently our ambassador to the US. An American official later joked that when a furious Washington DC demanded an explanation, they only had to make a local phone call.

Chandra’s pivotal role in India’s nuclear project is enough to write him into history books. But his role in economic reforms is as critical. The blueprints for liberalisation had been prepared through the 1980s. They were finalised by the Chandrashekhar government — in which Naresh Chandra was cabinet secretary. When P.V. Narasimha Rao (a lifelong economic protectionist) came to

A PATRIOT AND A GENTLEMAN

Naresh Chandra underplayed his role in nuclear programme, economic liberalisation

power in June 1991, it was Chandra who handed the new prime minister a note on the looming catastrophe, and briefed him on what needed to be done. If Rao’s genius was to turn crisis into opportunity and navigate the politics of change, to Chandra goes the credit of providing Rao and Manmohan Singh with ready blueprints.

To meet Chandra was to encounter a corpulent man, with the vernacular English of Allahabad University rather than the smooth flourish of St. Stephens College. To listen to Chandra, however, was to engage with a potent intellect synthesising history, government rules, and calls to action. His penchant for sharp analysis came, a college friend suspects, from his early degree in physics. His selection in 1992 to head the Babri Masjid special cell within the prime minister’s office — a black mark in an otherwise unblemished career — owed much to the fact that he had an encyclopedic knowledge of land tenure rules in Uttar Pradesh.

A life-long bachelor, he took an avuncular interest in the careers of young bureaucrats. He knew how to “create a court around him, to make you feel special”, a junior officer remembers. He also knew how to dominate meetings, all the while seeming subservient to politicians. Around 2006, Sanjaya Baru (then press secretary to prime minister Manmohan Singh) met his boss to discuss names for a new principal secretary. “I suggested Naresh Chandra, but it did not happen”. Baru speculates: “Sonia [Gandhi] would not have been happy with that. Naresh Chandra was a tough guy. There is no way Naresh would have allowed 10 Janpath into government policy making.”

Chandra’s virtuosity was to combine this toughness with likeability; he was revered in the bureaucracy and earned the trust of four prime ministers. He was also unobtrusively decent. In early 1991, cabinet secretary Chandra was walking into Parliament along with commerce secretary Montek Singh Ahluwalia. Montek was not just an outsider to the caste of IAS officers, he was a turbaned Sikh in the years after Operation Blue Star. As they entered Parliament, the security man beckoned only to Montek to step aside for frisking. Chandra, standing behind, quietly motioned to the guard to frisk him too so that Montek would not feel singled out. While Montek did not notice, Narasimha Rao — then an out of work opposition leader strolling in Parliament — saw what had happened. Rao later told his secretary that the incident etched in his mind “the kind of person Naresh is”.

Chandra’s contributions to Rajasthan (where he served for many years), economic liberalisation, and, above all, to India’s nuclear programme, would have made him a household name. But Chandra kept a low profile. He preferred to be trusted rather than celebrated, preferred a strong India to a loud India. In my last meeting with him, early this year, I remember him switching off a news TV channel as I entered. He said with gentle irritation, “Today, a uniform and flag are all you need to become a patriot”. He did not need either; he was the real deal.

Sitapati teaches at Ashoka University, and is the author of *Half-Lion: How P.V. Narasimha Rao Transformed India?*

JULY 10/11, 1977, FORTY YEARS AGO

MIZO REBELLION

THE UNDERGROUND MIZO National Front has stepped up its virulent activities in the wake of repudiation of the July 1, 1976 peace accord by the rebel Mizo leader, Lal Denga. The underground Mizos are said to be concentrating in and around Aizawl and Lungleh towns of the union territory and have carried out ambush attacks on patrol parties of the security forces in the last few days. A naik of the Mizoram Armed Police was killed in an ambush laid by the rebel Mizos on June 30. The rebels fired upon Naik Tankima from a church. Reacting strongly to Lal Denga’s claim that he was made to sign the peace treaty under duress, a spokesperson of the

Mizoram government said Lal Denga returned to India on his own accord and signed the peace agreement of his free will. Lal Denga had accepted the Constitution with Mizoram as an integral part of India and agreed to abjure violence and bring out his men into camps and surrender their arms.

JANATA POLICY

THE BROAD OUTLINE of the Janata government’s industrial policy were outlined in the Lok Sabha. MPs broadly welcomed George Fernandes’s approach, giving priority to small and rural industries and job-oriented projects. From the Opposition, M.N. Govindan Nair (CPI) and Lakkappa

(Congress) voiced doubts whether Fernandes would be able to translate his “good intentions” into government policy.

RAJYA SABHA POLLS

ALL FIVE JANATA nominees including Union Law Minister Shanti Bhushan and Dinesh Singh, former minister for external affairs, were elected unopposed in the byelections to the Rajya Sabha from UP. Among others elected to the Rajya Sabha were Palit Patit Pradhan of the Janata from Orissa, and Mama Baleshwar Dayal of the Janata from MP. Two Congress nominees, T.V. Chandrasekharappa and L.G. Havanur, were elected unopposed from Karnataka.



"Vladimir Putin is a master of detail and adept at manoeuvres. Donald Trump better read his briefing notes."

—THE GUARDIAN

In the Valley, against the odds

The contribution of J&K police in fighting terror is not appreciated enough



M.P. NATHANAEL

THE LYNCHING OF Deputy Superintendent of Police Mohammed Ayub Pandit on June 22 by a hostile mob in Nowhatta in the heart of Srinagar city has brought into focus the constant danger the policemen of Jammu and Kashmir are exposed to. They are increasingly being targeted by not just the militants but hostile mobs too. Earlier, on June 15, two constables of the J&K Police were gunned down by militants — one in Kulgam when he was on leave and the other in Hyderpora in Srinagar. On May 28, the militants attacked a posse of policemen escorting a bank vehicle, killing all five of them in Phambal area of Kulgam. On June 16 this year, sub inspector Feroz Ahmed, who was the station house officer of Achabal area, was killed in an ambush near Kulgad village in Anantnag district. Five other policemen, travelling in the jeep with the SHO, also died.

In the first half of this year, the state lost 17 policemen as against 23 between September 2015 and August 2016 and 24 in the corresponding period in 2014-2015. The figures were 13 and 16 in 2012-2013 and in 2013-2014, respectively.

These unsung bravehearts leave behind a saga of sacrifice and dedication for the sole objective of keeping the nation united. For those who debate every night on the electronic media, almost accusing every Kashmiri of being an anti-national, there are stories galore in the Valley of their high degree of patriotism. These bravehearts in khaki are the sons of the soil who toil day and night to keep the terrorists at bay and operate against them in tandem with the Indian Army, the Central Reserve Police Force and other para military personnel.

The Special Operation Group, commonly known as the SOG, comprising of well-trained sharpshooters, are always alongside the army and para military forces to take on the militants. Though the security forces have their own intelligence set-up, it is the local policemen who get the actionable intelligence, on the basis of which the operations are carried out. These policemen not only have the advantage of speaking the local language but also have extensive knowledge and familiarity with the terrain. That helps in launching operations against terrorists without loss of time. Time is of essence in anti-terror operations and the policemen are undeniably and indubitably a great asset for successful operations.

The technical intelligence coupled with human intelligence that the J&K police provide is of immense value to the security forces not just in carrying out operations, but also in warding off attacks as had recently happened in Sumbal area of Bandipora district, where a well-planned

attack in the wee hours of June 5 by four militants on a CRPF camp was foiled by the alert sentries of the camp this year. All the four militants were shot dead with no casualties on the CRPF side. The highly reliable intelligence gathered by the policemen enabled the SOG to rush to the camp in time and take on the militants along with the CRPF men.

Of late, the militants have started targeting policemen at their homes, which prompted the authorities to advise the men to desist from visiting their homes too often. The militants have issued diktats to the policemen to resign their jobs or face the consequences. It speaks volumes of their derring-do and devotion to duty that they have not succumbed to the pressure.

It is against this background that some of them had requested the government through social media that their martyrs be honoured in a befitting manner as is done in the army and the para military forces. None of the political leaders had ventured to attend the funerals of SI Feroz Ahmed and his colleagues. The presence of the leaders would have served as a motivating factor for the policemen besides being an expression of solidarity with the bereaved families. Later, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti made it a point to attend the funeral of DSP Mohammed Ayub Pandit.

Yet another sore point agitating the policemen is that they are asked to contribute a day's salary to the bereaved families. Though they do not grudge making the contribution, they feel let down by the government that pulls its hands back when it comes to providing assistance to the families of the martyred. The Union Home Ministry contributes Rs 1 crore as solatium to any para military personnel killed in action against terrorists. The Delhi government is known to have paid Rs 1 crore to a CRPF jawan who was killed in an encounter with Maoists last year. This is apart from the solatium paid to the families by the Central government. The Punjab government is known to pay Rs 50 lakh as ex-gratia to the families of martyred personnel of defence and para military forces and has gone a step further by empowering deputy commissioners to grant the amount to cut down the delay in routing the required documents through different channels.

There is no reason why J&K police personnel who die in the line of duty should not be paid a similar amount considering that the personnel of this state perform their duties at grave risk not only to their own lives but also to their family members. While the army and para military personnel serve a fixed tenure in the Valley and can look forward to a peaceful tenure thereafter, the policemen of Kashmir cannot hope for that kind of luxury. There is, perhaps, a need to bring about uniformity in the ex-gratia amount paid to families of policemen killed on duty.

It is high time the state and the Centre looked into the grievances of the policemen and took measures to ameliorate their lot.

The writer retired as
inspector general of police, CRPF

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

TOUGH CALLS

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'JD(U) calls meet, pressure builds on Tejashwi to quit as Deputy CM' (IE, July 10). Nitish Kumar has a reputation of being an honest, principled leader while Lalu Prasad continues to face corruption charges. Still, Kumar joined hands with Lalu against the BJP on the pretext of ideology. With the CBI lodging FIRs against Lalu's sons, who are members in Kumar's cabinet, the big question is whether Kumar will ask them to resign as it may result in the withdrawal of support by the RJD. Kumar has two options: To forget about image and let Lalu's sons continue in his cabinet or to drop Lalu's sons and, in case the RJD withdraws support, form a government with the support of the BJP.

M.C. Joshi, Lucknow

HOLISTIC REFORMS

THIS REFERS TO the article, 'Law, morality, triple talaq' (IE, July 10) by Faizan Mustafa. Any proposal for reform, like the one brought forth by the author, is indeed welcome. In matters of religion the vantage point of the correct institutional and moral authority may not be particularly relevant. The masses, in such matters, are governed by individuals, not institutions. But the proposed "ideal nikahnama" as a deterrent against triple divorce can overcome that handicap.

G. Javaid Rasool, UP

IMPORTANT WIN

THIS REFERS TO the report, 'Iraq declares victory over Islamic State in

LETTER OF THE WEEK AWARD

To encourage quality reader intervention, The Indian Express offers the Letter of the Week award. The letter adjudged the best for the week is published every Saturday. Letters may be e-mailed to editpage@expressindia.com or sent to The Indian Express, B-1/B, Sector 10, Noida-UP 201301. Letter writers should mention their postal address and phone number.

THE WINNER RECEIVES SELECT EXPRESS PUBLICATIONS

Mosul' (IE, July 10). The recapture of Mosul has great symbolic value for Iraqi forces. The self-proclaimed "caliphate", however, will continue to be a threat to regional and global security. The remnants of the force will likely continue to wage a asymmetrical war, and the larger ideological battle against extremism will go on. However, the victory in Mosul must not be diminished. That the Iraqi forces led from the front is also commendable.

Farhani Owais, Noida

The meaning of de-hyphenation

A hyphenated foreign policy, not just in West Asia, had handicapped India's ability to forge pragmatic ties that help our national interests. The Modi government is making an important break from the past



RAM MADHAV

"WE HAVE BEEN waiting for you, Prime Minister!" When I heard Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel say this to our Prime Minister at Ben Gurion airport, a three-year-old meeting between the two at a New York hotel flashed across my mind.

It was September, 2014. Prime Minister Narendra Modi was making his maiden visit to the United Nations to address the General Assembly (UNGA). Elaborate arrangements were underway for the first ever visit of the prime minister that included a big community reception to be attended by 25,000 Indian Americans.

Several meetings at the sidelines with global leaders were also being planned. One of them was with Prime Minister Netanyahu. The request for a meeting at the UNGA came from the Israeli foreign office. But the difficulty was that, as per the schedule, our Prime Minister was to leave the US on the day of the arrival of the Israeli Prime Minister for the UNGA address. The only slot available for the meeting between the two leaders was a Sunday evening, three days before the UNGA address date of the Israeli Prime Minister.

We assumed that the meeting wouldn't be feasible as Netanyahu could not come three days ahead of his UNGA address. Also, for a meeting in New York on a Sunday, he had to leave Israel on Saturday, which, for a practising Jew, is difficult. But, to our surprise, the Israeli side informed us that Prime Minister Netanyahu would be reaching New York for the meeting on Sunday.

Just as we were settling down with a sense of satisfaction over the keen interest of

Netanyahu for a meeting with Modi, panic calls started coming in from Jerusalem, four days before Sunday. The Israeli foreign office was informed by someone in the MEA in Delhi that scheduling a meeting with Netanyahu for the Prime Minister, when President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine was not going to be available for a similar meeting, would be difficult. It would go against the well-established convention, the Israelis were told.

It was hyphenated diplomacy of the Indian foreign policy establishment in action. The time had come for a political call to be taken about this convention. None other than Modi, with his courage of conviction, could have taken that call.

As expected, the Prime Minister brushed aside the conservative view and decided to go ahead with the meeting. That was the first instance of de-hyphenation of our foreign policy. The "sky is the limit to India-Israel relations" statement recollecting by Netanyahu at the Jerusalem airport was from that meeting.

Not just West Asia, there are several other instances where hyphenation has handicapped our ability to forge ties that help our national interests. De-hyphenation has helped us in formulating a more pragmatic foreign policy. Hyphenation, in most cases, is based on romantic ideological reasons. But foreign policy should be guided by pragmatic national and global interest only.

This is a big shift for an establishment that was trained in hyphenated diplomacy. One significant incident in the initial months of our government illustrates the hesitant transition of the establishment from hyphenation to de-hyphenation. Hamas and the Israeli Army were engaged in a serious battle during that time. Missiles were raining in from both sides. India was to issue a statement in the Security Council on the ongoing West Asia conflict. As was the practice, the statement drafted by our foreign office had routinely condemned Israel for using "disproportionately large" force against "minor provocation" by the Hamas. As is the wont,

Just as we were settling down with a sense of satisfaction over the keen interest of Netanyahu for a meeting with Modi, panic calls started coming in from Jerusalem, four days before Sunday. The Israeli foreign office was informed by someone in the MEA in Delhi that scheduling a meeting with Netanyahu for the Prime Minister, when President Mahmoud Abbas of Palestine was not going to be available for a similar meeting, would be difficult. It would go against the well-established convention, the Israelis were told. It was hyphenated diplomacy of the Indian foreign policy establishment in action. The time had come for a political call to be taken about this convention.

the statement had urged "both sides" to resolve the conflict "through dialogue".

That Hamas had fired hundreds of rockets into Israel and that they couldn't hit the targets only because of the high-end Israeli technology called the Iron Dome hardly mattered to those who drafted the statement. Also, the fact that in a war there won't be anything called "proportionate force", too, didn't matter. What mattered was the convention that in matters of West Asia, the blame should always be on Israel. In our zeal to uphold that convention, we had even sought to advise Israel to do something that even we wouldn't be doing ever: Dialogue with the terrorist outfit, Hamas. EAM Sushma Swaraj had to rise in Parliament to clarify that the government wouldn't take sides in the conflict.

It was not the fault of the ministry staffers. It was the convention that had gone on for decades because of our romanticism in foreign policy. Someone had to bring in realism, which Modi did.

It doesn't mean there is any shift in our West Asia policy. We are wedded to our support for the just cause of the Palestinian people and their government. We have supported Palestine in resolutions sponsored by them or other countries at the UN on many occasions in the last three years. That policy will continue.

To attribute our de-hyphenation to ideology and insinuate that it is anti-Muslim smacks of the communal mindset and lack of knowledge about foreign policy on part of the accusers themselves. In our pragmatic de-hyphenated foreign policy, we are friends with Iran and Saudi Arabia at the same time; US and Russia at the same time. China, Philippines, Japan, Vietnam—all of them may be friends or foes at various levels; but for us they are all our friends on a stand-alone basis.

"There are no permanent friends or foes in diplomacy; there are only permanent interests", said Henry Kissinger.

The writer is national general secretary, BJP, and director, India Foundation

Competing communalisms

How the violence in West Bengal feeds into the Hindutva narrative



SHAMSUL ISLAM

THE RECENT unhindered violence at Baduria and adjoining Basirhat in West Bengal's North 24 Parganas district was reportedly perpetrated by Muslim mobs, protesting against an objectionable post denigrating Islam, its Prophet and holy place by a Hindu teenager from the area. The violence not only weakens the democratic-secular narrative against rising Hindutva violence on Muslims, Christians and Dalits but also provides the RSS another opportunity to pose as the defender of "persecuted" Hindus.

This fact cannot be ignored: Whenever mobs inspired by Hindutva politics have attacked the whole Muslim community for a "crime" perpetrated by an individual Muslim or group — like the killings of Muslims in Gujarat in 2002 as revenge for the burning of train coaches at Godhra — the same was widely condemned. Whenever Muslim localities and properties were attacked as revenge against some objectionable posts by some Muslims, or Muslims

were targeted for allegedly carrying beef, public opinion generally decried such engineered violence.

By all accounts, the Baduria-Basirhat area has no history of violence between Hindus and Muslims, not even in the pre-Partition days. The present violence appears to be the outcome of a tussle for supremacy between a Muslim "strongman" who is patronised by the TMC and a Hindu "strongman" backed by the BJP/RSS. Both of them presented themselves as saviours of their respective communities. The saddest part of the incident was the attitude of the law and order machinery in the area. The controversial Facebook post had gone viral three days prior to the attacks on Hindus. The police and senior district officials remained mute spectators to this. It seems as if they were waiting for this kind of flare-up so that the polarisation is complete.

The mobs, which roamed freely, attacking their victims and destroying their property for a couple of days, claimed that they

were doing so to save the honour of Islam. The honour of Islam seemed to be so shallow and vulnerable that a Facebook post would destroy it. Moreover, this zeal for saving the honour of Islam did not extend beyond the boundaries of an assembly constituency. Muslims beyond this limited area did not bother about it. Does it mean that only Muslims in this area are true believers? The fact is that it was not a religious issue but a ploy to settle political feuds.

This lawlessness and the criminal attacks by a section of Muslims in 24 Parganas also shows how a plethora of Islamic organisations/institutions — which are found by the dozen in every Muslim mohalla — though claiming to be the guardians of Muslims and Islam, are least bothered about the strategic ends of the community. They waste their time and energy in fighting against the rights of Muslim women and enforcing sharia. They have no appetite for building an egalitarian and secular community.

It is unfortunate that at a time when the

violent attacks of Hindutva organisations on minorities are under serious scrutiny in India and abroad, sections of the minority community — by indulging in senseless violence — are providing legitimacy to Hindutva terror.

It is true that during the period of violence in West Bengal, there are many instances when Muslims saved and sheltered their Hindu neighbours. It may be true that those who perpetrated the violence came from outside. But that does not reduce the degree of culpability of local Muslims. They should have fought these criminal elements and saved their neighbours. This would have strengthened the secular fabric of our country and denied any legitimacy to the politics of polarisation. Unfortunately, we are witnessing a sad scenario when Muslim communalists seem to be competing with Hindutva communalists in undoing democratic, secular India.

The writer taught political science at Delhi University