

**A thought for today**

Countries should view their own interests in the broader context. And refrain from pursuing their own interests at the expense of others

XI JINPING

Xiamen Breakthrough

Brics declaration condemns Pakistan based terror groups for first time

In a diplomatic breakthrough, the Xiamen Brics declaration has condemned terrorism in all its forms, and named Pakistan-based terror groups Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed and the Haqqani Network. This is not only the first time that the Pakistani groups have been mentioned in a Brics declaration, it also comes after last year's summit in Goa where efforts to condemn the outfits were blocked by Chinese recalcitrance. In this context, it's significant that the latest declaration comes at a summit hosted in China. After the Doklam standoff, some quarters had expected Beijing to harden its position against Indian interests. Besides, in the run up to the Brics summit Beijing had warned New Delhi not to raise the issue of Pakistan-based terrorism at Xiamen.

That China did eventually relent on including Pakistani terror outfits in the Brics declaration suggests that New Delhi's firmness and persistence in flagging the issue has paid off. But apart from that, US President Donald Trump calling out Pakistan for sheltering terror groups may have had an effect on Beijing – which otherwise turns a blind eye towards them in an attempt to cushion Pakistan, which it considers a strategically.

It would be wrong to see the declaration as a diplomatic 'victory' for India. Terror groups operating out of Pakistan share logistics, resources and ideology. Targeting just those which take aim at one's own country while turning a blind eye to the others – in an exceedingly narrow definition of national interest – is self-defeating. Neither is it tenable to claim – as Islamabad often argues and Beijing reiterates – that Pakistan has made the most 'sacrifices' in fighting terror, as those are the inevitable consequences of selectively nurturing terror groups (in the end, such nurturing can never be selective). It is therefore in Pakistan's own interest – and Beijing too should be nudging it towards this point of view as Islamabad's trusted ally – to end such support.

Following the Xiamen declaration New Delhi should renew its efforts to get Jaish chief Masood Azhar proscribed by the UN, and Beijing should drop its objections there. At the Brics summit and elsewhere Chinese President Xi Jinping has, correctly and commendably, spoken up for global cooperation. But that is not compatible with riding roughshod over Indian interests. Ultimately, China must realise that terrorism emanating from Pakistan harms everyone's interests, including Chinese ones.

Musical Chairs

Don't allow sacking of chief coach Roelant Oltmans to affect Indian hockey's 2018 medal prospects

Sackings are always abrupt in the sporting world and hockey is no exception. Chief hockey coach Roelant Oltmans became the 23rd casualty in as many years. The Dutchman's exit from Indian hockey affairs was overdue given the team's disappointing performance at the Hockey World League in London in June. India finished sixth out of 10 teams, which included shocking losses to weaker teams like Malaysia and Canada. Despite showing remarkable improvement in recent years, lack of consistent performances outside Asia has been the bane of Indian hockey. Hockey India's management must address this problem immediately, while ensuring momentum is not lost in India's quest for an elusive medal at the 2018 World Cup and 2020 Olympics.

Oltmans was the longest-serving foreign staffer in Indian hockey since his appointment as high performance director in January 2013 and later chief coach in 2015. In his former capacity he presided over the removal of three foreign coaches – Michael Nobbs, Terry Walsh and Paul van Ass. Though the current high performance director David John has been handed temporary charge, the senior team needs a full-time specialist coach who is given a long rope to regroup a young team.

The Dutchman's exit has also given momentum to the debate of foreign vs Indian coach. In recent times, the closest India has come to getting into an Olympic semi-final came in 1996 and 2000 under Indian coaches – Cedric D'Souza and Vasudev Bhaskaran – respectively. Looking for a top foreign coach at this juncture is tough as the likes of Terry Walsh, Maximiliano Caldas and Carlos Retegui are already booked till the 2018 World Cup. Hockey India should keep the option of a home-bred coach open.

The big job interview

Sat in on one the other day, it's just the same as in 1970

Bikram Vohra

Sat in on a corporate interview the other day and the questions were exactly the same as were asked in 1970. Banal, pointless and clichéd. Everyone lies and no one really cares what is being said, only how you say it. The candidate looks like he has been through a washing machine, all slick and shiny and nervous as anything and he makes incandescent statements like, may I come in, Sir and thank you for seeing me, Sir may I sit down, Sir...

What do you think that chair is for?

Then come the same questions that are now threadbare with overuse.

Where do you see yourself in ten years? (Say what, I don't know where I see myself for dinner tonight, forget a decade and I am sitting here in front of you hunting for a job, what's with this future perfect thing?)

How do you see yourself fitting into the company? (I don't have a clue tell me what you want me to say and I'll say it, just give me the job.)

Why did you choose us? (Because you advertised your vacancies, you silly fellow, that's why, bills to pay, a man has to survive, you are my CV's 38th destination.)

Are you a team player? (Nah, I am a lone wolf, you know I am going to say I am the best team player in the world, I cooperate, take orders, work well with peers, love my seniors, help my juniors, once the contract is signed I shall be another little snitch letting down all my colleagues.)

What is your USP? I am hard-working, dedicated, loyal, honest and productive (for all this read I am a snivelling little lickspittle who can pull out the long knives as well as the rest of them and will have no qualms over clambering over the careers of the others to get to the top, so there).

As for loyalty, that is only a lack of option, get the opportunity, out goes loyalty.

Are you prepared to do tenures in the rural branches? (At this moment I am prepared to sit on a tree, swim the Ganges in spate and work from a cave with a hurricane lamp if that is what it takes to be selected.)

Are you prepared to be flexible in your salary demands? (Uh oh, they've already started rolling the ball down their stony street. And they haven't even made the offer yet.)

Then the big one, the clever finale:

Why should we select you? (You really expect me to answer that honestly, I mean, really, like because I am made of sterling silver and bring a lot to the table and am to the manner born... if you swallow that you will swallow anything.)

Big Tragedy, Empty Rhetoric

To prevent more Gorakhpurs, shake off the apathy and fix India's broken public healthcare

Kapil Sibal

 In the wake of over 70 encephalitis-afflicted children dying after the oxygen supply at Gorakhpur's Baba Raghav Das Hospital was cut off following a payment dispute, the stage has been set for a rigorous debate on criminal negligence and public health spending. Initiatives such as Swachh Bharat and Mission Indradhanush, though commendable, advance the notion that India's public health landscape is positively transforming. However, it is too soon to celebrate.

Tragedies such as the mass deaths in Gorakhpur, or more recently in Farrukhabad which claimed 49 newborns, remind us of the reality of India's abysmal public health situation and raise deeply troubling questions on India's priorities in its run-up to becoming a superpower.

An outstanding debt of Rs 70 lakh on a prominent state-run institution served an instant death sentence to children. The government's claims that it hadn't known of the oxygen shortage until August 4 have been contradicted by a recent newspaper report, according to which UP ministers had been made aware of the debt and the subsequent punitive cutting off of oxygen supply in March. This continued until August 9, when chief minister Yogi Adityanath visited the hospital and was informed of the situation. However, no urgent action followed.

The same evening, the oxygen supply was cut. Thousands of children have died since 1978 when the pestilence first broke out, and the hospital management was as abysmal then as it remains today. It is time to accept that a major overhaul in India's public health landscape will only be achieved with adequate budget allocations – a move only possible when we confront our own apathy and move beyond empty rhetoric.

Since 1978, right around monsoons when encephalitis strikes, people from in and around Gorakhpur, other neighbouring districts, and even Bihar and Nepal, teem outside the hospital as it is the only institution providing treatment



virus. The other pathogens could be the West Nile virus, dengue virus, Chandipura virus and chikungunya virus – all known to cause AES. However, over the years, India's focus has been on the eradication of JE while other forms of encephalitis remain comparatively neglected.

As a result, while the number of JE cases have reduced, the havoc of undiagnosed encephalitis continues. In 2015, the Indian Council of Medical Research found that from over 10,000 cases of encephalitis, only 8.4% were of the JE strain. While several independent research teams have carried out research to understand the disease in its entirety and presented often conflicting findings, no concrete diagnosis for the "other aetiology" encephalitis has been found.

Without diagnosis, it is impossible to devise any practical preventive strategies. Forty years down the line, it is high time for a more stringent, research-driven focus on the other causes of AES.

With no significant allocation of funds towards public health, and the poor state of health infrastructure in the country, economically disenfranchised people are forced to turn to private healthcare which leaves them penniless and in debt. There is a need to spend a significantly higher proportion of our GDP on public health, make public health more accessible to the poor by investing in more facilities, improve the quality of healthcare by increasing human resource and training them well and regularly, monitor the public and private health sectors to ensure quality health services for all.

When we thump our chests and speak of development for progress of the nation, do we forget that people make the nation and not the other way round? If by development we mean skyscrapers, wealth, health and privilege for some (but certainly not all), what kind of nationalism are we buying into? So long as our medical facilities continue to languish, and our people continue to perish due to sheer negligence, our patriotism rings hollow.

The writer is a former Union minister and senior Congress leader

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doctors in UP. Doctors at BRD knew oxygen would ultimately run out 10 days in advance when the supply was cut off, and no steps to arrange for backup were taken. This can only be described as criminal negligence of the highest order.

The disease is commonly referred to in India as Japanese encephalitis. However, the term only represents select cases of encephalitis caused by the JE pathogen. WHO has coined the broader term acute encephalitis syndrome (AES) to refer to a cluster of illnesses with similar symptoms.

Many cases in the Gorakhpur belt have displayed symptoms common with JE albeit without the presence of the JE

After Supreme Court's landmark ruling recognising right to privacy, state and civil bodies must define its contours

Mishi Choudhary

 The unanimous decision by the constitutional bench of the Supreme Court recognising a fundamental right of privacy opens a new era in Indian constitutional law. The court's striking judgment has brought India to the forefront of the world's democracies in defining the meaning of privacy in the internet age.

But the landmark judgment is merely the beginning of the process. Having spoken, it leaves much to be done both in courts and in Parliament, as the central government adjusts to a new state of affairs and the eyes of the world's technological freedom advocates turn towards India.

In the courts, the process will now shift to efforts by advocates to bring a wide spectrum of privacy claims on behalf of citizens. The judgment of the Supreme Court intentionally leaves to this process of case by case development the definition of the contours of the fundamental right now recognized.

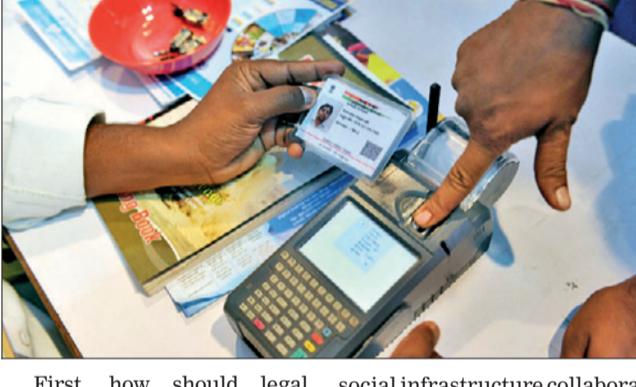
Advocates representing citizens in all walks of life will now assert violations of the

fundamental right "not authorised by law" or without any countervailing societal or public interest in a multitude of contexts. This will lead the Supreme Court and the high courts to define in their response to each petition the scope and precise outlines of the newly recognised right.

Though this process will undoubtedly take time, counsel across India acting with a common purpose and with due regard to the strategic presentation of claims will be able to

extend the boundaries of this right vigorously, particularly as regards informational rights in the context of the internet.

But beyond the case by case litigation the Supreme Court expects to spell out the contours of the right, the important legal policy questions and the legislative steps to take are now also clear.



First, how should legal duties be allocated in the private market as government of India performs its responsibility to protect citizens' fundamental right?

Legislation to protect people – oddly called everywhere "data protection law" as though data were what we need to protect – will result. Parliament will have the advantage of watching the implementation of the European Commission's General Data Protection Regulation throughout the EU in 2018, as it considers its own legislation. The draft legislation, already before Lok Sabha as a private member's bill submitted by Baijayant 'Jay' Panda, is a valuable starting point.

Second, how should digital

social infrastructure collaboratively built by government and private parties, such as the "India Stack", be designed so as to ensure that fundamental rights are fundamentally respected, from the ground up? This inquiry will involve multi-party discussion among state, business and civil society parties at both the technical and legal levels. Lawyers and software architects who have dealt with and studied these issues not only in India, but around the world, have expertise to offer.

The civil society organisations that have watched with alarm Aadhaar's "mission creep", and who are justifiably concerned about the unintended consequences of a "move fast and

break things" approach to the digital infrastructure for India's future, must be heard. Landmark legislation – probably the first of its kind in the world – will result from this process, which has not yet begun in earnest.

Third, how should the government, with respect to its own activities, assure citizens' fundamental right to privacy as it undertakes to guard national security and preserve public order? These undeniably compelling state interests must now be pursued by the least restrictive possible means, wherever they trammel the citizens' fundamental right to be free of unnecessary or overly intrusive government surveillance. A citizens' privacy charter, delineating how the government can achieve its national security and public order interests with maximum respect for the fundamental right of privacy, should be enacted.

These three pillars – a data protection bill, a citizens' privacy charter; and a digital infrastructure regulatory regime for the India Stack – will uphold the newly recognised privacy right, while enabling India to step forward as the world's leading voice on the legal and software technologies of privacy for the 21st century.

The writer is a technology lawyer

Sacredspace

True Education

The end-product of education should be a free, creative man, who can battle against historical circumstances and adversities of nature...

A life of joy and happiness is possible only on the basis of knowledge and science.

S Radhakrishnan



Teaching And Learning: A Two-Way Process

Christopher Mendonca

The tradition of holding our teachers in reverence is steeped in traditions of the East. It grew out of an acknowledgement that learning is not something to be hoarded; it is to be passed on. The wisdom that the sages of old acquired was synonymous with knowledge in as much as it meant not just scriptural knowledge or assimilation of information but knowledge gained from experience of life's lessons. Since life embraces all without distinction, its lessons become a shared experience. In this experience the teacher and student enter into a relationship in which both are students and teachers of one another. There is no room for superiority.

In its origins, all teaching was ultimately spiritual. The advent of modern science has tended to blur the lines of congruence between knowledge and wisdom. Acquiring 'knowledge' is now synonymous

with acquisition of power: Aren't we confusing knowledge with information?

Being well read or well informed need not necessarily put you above those who have been denied access to information and education. Some highly educated people do share their knowledge but often, it is an act of condescension. We sometimes forget that "education" etymologically is a "drawing out" from within. Far from being a social concern, it sometimes degenerates into a financial enterprise.

Some of us may on this day

loathe the teachers in our lives

who seemed to delight in

pointing out our mistakes and

correcting them. But it is because

of their vigilance and concern

that many of us have learnt from our

mistakes and become better at what we do.

The guru-sishya parampara of ancient

times was a great tradition that enabled

holistic education and made possible for teachers and students to find dedicated time to grow in their relationship in the teaching-learning process. Today's education system may not afford forging of such long term bonding; however, we do remember our teachers and we might even make the time to send a personal note

to a teacher who became a significant role model in our childhood.

Some of us will think of sending a bouquet of flowers to the teacher, who, from among many, touched our hearts, not so much by what they taught us, but by empowering us to be fully human.

A personal visit from a past student is known to have warmed the hearts of many a retired teacher. Beyond examinations, unit tests, the measurement of ability, the grades and percentages that indicate only how effectively we can reproduce information stored in the

hard-disks of our brain, we somehow remember only those teachers who went beyond them. These are the teachers who transcended the 'self' and whose words and deeds are etched in our memory only because in so doing, they enabled and empowered us to transcend ourselves.

These are the teachers who made us realise that the signpost is not the road. They showed by example that the journey itself was as important –