

VEDHIK
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ANALYSIS
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FOREWORD

We, at Team Vedhik is happy to introduce a new initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" compilations to help you with UPSC Civil Services Examination preparation. We believe this initiative - "Daily Current Affairs_The Hindu" would help students, especially beginners save time and streamline their preparations with regard to Current Affairs. A content page and an Appendix has been added segregating and mapping the content to the syllabus.

It is an appreciable efforts by Vedhik IAS Academy helping aspirants of UPSC Civil Services Examinations. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Babu Sebastian, former VC - MG University in extending all support to this endeavour. Finally I also extend my thanks to thank Ms. Shilpa Sasidharan and Mr. Shahul Hameed for their assistance in the preparing the compilations.

We welcome your valuable comments so that further improvement may be made in the forthcoming material. We look forward to feedback, comments and suggestions on how to improve and add value for students. Every care has been taken to avoid typing errors and if any reader comes across any such error, the authors shall feel obliged if they are informed at their Email ID.

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Modi discusses Afghanistan with Boris Johnson

Glasgow talks also cover climate change and post-COVID scenario

KALLOL BHATTACHERJEE
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his British counterpart Boris Johnson on Monday discussed the evolving situation in Afghanistan on the sidelines of the COP26 summit in Glasgow. The Mi-

nistry of External Affairs (MEA), in a statement, said the leaders discussed bilateral partnership in the context of climate change, Indo-Pacific strategy and post-COVID global economic recovery.

"The two Prime Ministers reviewed the implementa-

tion of the Roadmap 2030 priorities, particularly in trade and economy, people to people [ties], health, defence and security areas," said the MEA.

The MEA said both the leaders reviewed progress in the trade talks for Enhanced Trade Partnership, and also discussed bilateral cooperation in green hydrogen, renewable energy and clean

technologies, including collaboration through the International Solar Alliance and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure.

The meeting comes days after U.K.'s Foreign Secretary Liz Truss visited India for talks on U.K.-India free trade deal and cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region.



Boris Johnson

Sri Lanka fisher leaders meet Indian envoy

They convey concern over 'delay in India's response' to bottom trawling issue

MEERA SRINIVASAN
COLOMBO

The Indian High Commissioner in Colombo on Monday assured Sri Lanka's northern fishermen that he would convey their concerns over bottom trawling by Indian fishermen in the Palk Strait to both New Delhi and Tamil Nadu and look at some immediate measures to address the problem.

A delegation of fisher leaders from Sri Lanka's northern districts, along with Jaffna legislator M.A. Sumanthiran, met Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay in Colombo on Monday, and voiced concern over the "delay in India's response" to the issue of bottom trawling in the Palk Strait. The meeting was consequent to a recent discus-



Seeking solution: Fisher leaders with Indian High Commissioner Gopal Baglay on Monday. ■ SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

sion, held when High Commissioner Baglay called on Tamil National Alliance (TNA) leader R. Sampanthan last week, according to TNA spokesman Mr. Sumanthiran, who was also at the meeting. "The fisher community leaders recalled that the Indian side had agreed twice – in 2010 and 2016 – to phase out and end the prac-

tice of bottom trawling. But it has not ended yet," the Jaffna MP told *The Hindu*, after Monday's meeting.

A fortnight ago, northern Sri Lankan fishermen held a sea rally, demanding that Sri Lanka implement its laws against bottom trawling, a destructive fishing method that erodes the seabed, endangering marine organ-

isms. Dozens of boats with black flags travelled 100 km from the north-eastern Mullaitivu town to Point Pedro in Jaffna, with some TNA MPs joining the protest. Fishermen from Tamil Nadu crossing the International Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) and fishing in Sri Lankan waters, using the harmful bottom trawling fishing method, has been a recurring flash-point in India-Sri Lanka ties.

"The High Commissioner listened to the fisher leaders' grievances and told them that he would convey their sentiments to both New Delhi and Tamil Nadu. He agreed that while long term solutions are taking time, it is important to come up with some short-term measures meanwhile," Mr. Sumanthiran said.

Time for action

The G20 meeting has come at a critical moment for the global political economy

At their first in-person meeting in two years, leaders of the G20 did not shy away from re-engaging with the biggest issues facing the global community today, including the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, a major tax agreement, and steps to address concerns regarding global economic growth and stability. On coordinated efforts to mitigate the pandemic, the focus was on vaccine production and distribution, with assurances of support to WHO's target of inoculating 40% or more of the global population against COVID-19 by 2021, and at least 70% by mid-2022. The implicit assumption in this commitment by G20 leaders is that initiatives to boost the supply of vaccines in developing countries will succeed, and cooperation will help the world overcome supply and financing constraints. On climate change, the Group leaders re-committed their nations to providing \$100 billion a year toward adaptation, mitigation, and green technologies, focusing on the needs of developing countries. However, in this sphere, a divergence of views still exists across developing and developed nations: ahead of this summit and the 2021 climate conference in Glasgow, India had rejected the call to announce a target of zero emissions. Prime Minister Narendra Modi appears to have scored a victory in this regard as the post-summit communiqué commits the G20 to limiting global warming to 1.5° C and identified sustainable and responsible consumption and production as “critical enablers”.

The world community is on shakier footing regarding the fragile post-COVID economic recovery underway after paralysing lockdowns. Unsurprisingly, given the rising inflation, spiking energy prices, and alarming supply chain bottlenecks, G20 leaders were quick to affirm that national stimulus policies would not be removed prematurely. Even so, it would remain a challenge to walk the tightrope between preserving financial stability and fiscal sustainability. Perhaps in a bid to avoid potentially debilitating wobbles in global finance, the G20 leadership agreed to slap multinationals with a minimum 15% tax to create “a more stable and fairer international tax system”. This would impact the tech titans of Silicon Valley, as this initiative would make it harder for such companies to benefit from locating themselves in relatively lower-tax jurisdictions. This OECD-led reform enjoys the support of 136 countries, which account for more than 90% of global GDP, and is likely to enter into force in 2023 or after. Nations such as the U.S. are divided on whether to approve this proposal domestically, and unless there is unanimity amongst the discussants, the initiative risks facing implementation delays. The G20 meeting has come at a critical moment for the global political economy. If it results in timely, effective, coordinated action across major nations, hope for recovery will remain afloat.

Sign off on Paris Rulebook, says BASIC

Bhupender Yadav articulates view of Brazil, South Africa, India and China at Glasgow conference

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

On the opening day of the 26th United Nations Conference of Parties (COP), Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav delivered a statement on behalf of the BASIC group of countries – Brazil, South Africa, India and China – at the U.N. Climate Change Conference under way in Glasgow.

These major developing economies are significant polluters but bear diminished responsibility for the carbon dioxide that has been pumped into the atmosphere since 1850 and also have low per capita emissions because of their significant populations.

These countries have therefore for many years sought to rebuff pressure from developed countries to take on firmer emission reductions.

Mr. Yadav said a key demand of the BASIC was that the Paris Agreement Rule-



Protest flag: The Red Rebel Brigade, an 'activist' troupe, at the Glasgow Central station. •AFP

book be concluded at COP26.

While the Paris Agreement laid out the framework for international action, the Rulebook will set this Agreement in motion by laying out the tools and processes to enable it is implemented fairly and properly.

Countries had agreed to develop and finalise the Pa-

ris Rulebook at COP24 in Poland in 2018.

"In doing so, full effect must be given to implementation of the principles of Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) and, recognition of the very different national circumstances of Parties," Mr. Yadav said in his written

statement.

Mr. Yadav reiterated BASIC demands that he has also spelt out in India that COP26 must aim for higher global ambition on climate finance and adaptation as well, along with recognition of the Parties' differing historical responsibilities and the developmental challenges faced by developing countries,

compounded by the pandemic.

The latest available science makes it clear that all Parties need to immediately contribute their fair share and achieving this would require developed countries to rapidly reduce their emissions and dramatically scale-up their financial support to developing countries.

Vanniyar quota law unconstitutional: HC

‘The Act went against the Constitution’

B. TILAK CHANDAR
MADURAI

The Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court on Monday declared as unconstitutional the law providing 10.5% internal reservation to the Vanniakula Kshatriya community within the 20% reservation for the Most Backward Classes (MBCs) in education and public employment.

The court held that it was *ultra vires* the Constitution.

A Division Bench of Justices M. Duraiswamy and K. Murali Shankar gave its judgment on a batch of petitions that challenged the validity of the Act, which was passed hours before the model code of conduct came into force in February for the Assembly election.

No supporting material

It said the State had not collected any material to prove that the Vanniyar caste – that is, the Vanniakula Kshatriya, comprising Vanniyar, Vanniya, Vannia Gounder, Gounder or Kander, Padayachi, Palli and Agnikula Kshatriya – was unable to compete with the other extremely marginalised communities. When the entire Most Backward Classes were enjoying 20% reservation, this caste alone was given 10.5%. This would affect the prospects of the others, it said.

The government had not considered the caste-wise population, and there was no data available with the government to invoke the provision in the Constitution to provide internal reservation. There was nothing on record to establish that the government had held deliberations with all stakeholders, especially the communities that would be affected by the Act, the court said.

The court observed that by virtue of the 102nd constitutional amendment, the powers of the Assembly to include and exclude the Backward Classes was bestowed on Parliament. But the 105th constitutional amendment restored the power of the States to identify and notify the Backward Classes. The 102nd amendment came into existence on August 11, 2018, and the 105th amendment was enacted on August 19, 2021. The court held that on the date of its enactment, February 26, 2021, the State legislature had no power to pass such legislation.

The Tamil Nadu Backward Classes, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions and of Appointments or Posts in the Services under the State) Act, 1993, was brought in to protect the 69% quota.

Unacceptable, says PMK

Meanwhile, PMK founder S. Ramadoss on Monday urged the Tamil Nadu Government to appeal in the Supreme Court against the Madras High Court’s verdict declaring the 10.5% internal reservation for the Vanniyaars unconstitutional.

In a statement, he termed the verdict “unacceptable” because such questions were not raised by the Madras High Court or the Supreme Court against the internal reservation provided to the Muslims or the Arundhathiyars in T.N.

He said Chief Minister M.K. Stalin, “who has understood the need for such a quota despite the fact that the law was passed by the previous [AIADMK] government”, has the “duty and responsibility” to reinstate it through legal and political steps.

Will tweak policy to ensure 75% jobs for Kannadigas: Bommai

Present incentive-driven scheme for industries will be reviewed, says CM

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
BENGALURU

Urging the people to make Karnataka Rajyotsava a "Janostava" (people's festival), Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday said the State Government would tweak the existing employment policy to ensure that Kannadigas got 75% of skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

Participating in the 66th Rajyotsava function at Sree Kanteerava Stadium here, the Chief Minister said the Government would take a decision to ensure maximum jobs for Kannadigas in both public and private sectors.

"It's not important how much money entrepreneurs invest in Karnataka, but how many jobs they are providing Kannadigas," he said.



Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai speaking at the Vidhana Soudha in Bengaluru on Monday. ■ K. MURALI KUMAR

The existing incentive-driven policy for industries would be reviewed to ensure more jobs for local people in small and medium sectors, Mr. Bommai said.

The Chief Minister said Kannada would always get priority in the State adminis-

tration, policies and programmes. "Our language has a rich history of thousands of years. We are blessed with a rich diversity and natural resources, and also the resources and skill to safeguard them," he said.

Despite many cultural and

historical invasions, Kannada retained its rich cultural diversity.

"It is our duty to promote Kannada not only in Karnataka but also in other parts of the country and the globe. Kannada vachanas and folk songs should reach the length and breadth of the country," Mr. Bommai said.

PM extends greetings

Greeting the people of Karnataka, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said, "Best wishes on the special occasion of Karnataka Rajyotsava. Karnataka has made a special mark due to the innovative zeal of its people. The State is at the forefront of outstanding research and enterprise. May Karnataka scale newer heights of success in the times to come."

Pentagon rattled by China's military push

They are expanding rapidly in space, in cyberspace and then in land, sea and air, says Gen. Mark Milley

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON

China's growing military muscle and its drive to end American predominance in the Asia-Pacific is rattling the U.S. defence establishment. American officials see trouble quickly accumulating on multiple fronts – Beijing's expanding nuclear arsenal, its advances in space, cyber and missile technologies, and threats to Taiwan.

"The pace at which China is moving is stunning," says Gen. John Hyten, the second-highest ranking officer in the U.S. military, who previously commanded the U.S. nuclear forces and oversaw the Air Force space operations.

At stake is a potential shift in the global balance of power that has favoured the U.S. for decades.

A realignment more favourable to China does not pose a direct threat to the U.S. but could complicate



Power point: A model of LY-70 air defence missile weapon system displayed at an airshow in Zhuhai. ■ REUTERS

U.S. alliances in Asia. New signs of how the Pentagon intends to deal with the China challenge may emerge in the coming weeks from Biden administration policy reviews on nuclear weapons, global troop basing and overall defence strategy.

For now, officials marvel at how Beijing is marshalling

the resources, technology and political will to make rapid gains – so rapid that the Biden administration is attempting to reorient all aspects of U.S. foreign and defence policy.

The latest example of surprising speed was China's test of a hypersonic weapon capable of partially orbiting

Earth before re-entering the atmosphere and gliding on a manoeuvrable path to its target. The weapon system's design is meant to evade U.S.

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missile defences, and although Beijing insisted it was testing a reusable space vehicle, not a missile, the test appeared to have startled U.S. officials.

Sputnik moment

Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said the test was "very close" to being a Sputnik moment, akin to the 1957 launching by the Soviet Union of the world's first space satellite, which caught the world by surprise.

Gen. Milley and other U.S. officials have declined to discuss details of the Chinese test, saying they are secret. He called it "very concern-

ing" for the U.S. but added that problems posed by China's military modernisation run far deeper.

"That's just one weapon system," he said in a Bloomberg Television interview. "The Chinese military capabilities are much greater than that. They're expanding rapidly in space, in cyber and then in the traditional domains of land, sea and air." On the nuclear front, private satellite imagery in recent months has revealed large additions of launch silos that suggest the possibility that China plans to increase its fleet of land-based intercontinental ballistic missiles, or ICBMs.

Pentagon officials and defence hawks on Capitol Hill point to China's modernisation as a key justification for rebuilding the U.S. nuclear arsenal, a project expected to cost more than \$1 billion over 30 years.

Finding a way out of India's deepening water stress

In any new National Water Policy, the aim should also be to encourage conserving water resources and efficient usage



THOMAS VARGHESE

The complexity and scale of the water crisis in India calls for a locus specific response, that can galvanise and integrate the ongoing work of different Ministries and Departments through new configurations. Such an integrated approach must necessarily cut across sectoral boundaries and not stop at the merger achieved between the two Ministries of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation and the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation, which led to the formation of the Ministry of Jal Shakti in 2019.

Understanding sources used

Seeing India's looming water crisis through the locus of 'urban' and 'rural' not only allows a better grasp of the causative factors but also enables a stronger grip on the strategies to be deployed, to reverse the water crisis. Fundamental to this is a preliminary understanding of the sources from which the country draws water to meet its varying needs. In the rural areas, 80%-90% of the drinking water and 75% of the water used for agriculture is drawn from groundwater sources. In urban areas, 50%-60% of the water supply is drawn from groundwater sources, whereas the remaining is sourced from surface water resources such as rivers, often located afar, in addition to lakes, tanks and reservoirs.

According to the composite wa-

ter management index released by the think tank NITI Aayog in 2019, 21 major cities (including Delhi, Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad) were on the brink of exhausting groundwater resources, affecting about 100 million people. The study also points out that by 2030, the demand for water is projected to be twice the available supply.

The Chennai example

A significant, and by no means less worrying, example of the water crisis that unfolded before our eyes was in Chennai in 2019, where life came to a standstill and parts of the city went without piped water for months. Though this may well have been forgotten, Chennai remains a spectacle of the impending tragedies brought about by the city's inability to meet the basic needs of citizens, *vis-à-vis* drinking water, cooking and sanitation.

A closer look at the factors that brought about the water crisis in Chennai is inescapable, should we gain a better grasp of the underlying problems, especially as this was a city which among others like Mumbai had suffered from floods previously. Many have cited the poor rainfall received in Chennai in the previous year as one of the main reasons for the water crisis. Though it is true that rainfall was low, which was 50% less than normal, focusing on this factor alone would absolve responsibility by blaming the vagaries of the rainfall patterns to a fast-changing climate, without understanding the ground-level steps (or missteps) which have been equally responsible factors.

Chief among these is that the city has been built by incrementally encroaching floodplains and paving over lakes and wetlands that



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would have otherwise helped the process of recharging groundwater. The lack of space for water to percolate underground prevented rainwater from recharging the aquifers.

This was further exacerbated by the loss of green cover (which would have otherwise helped water retention) to make way for infrastructure projects. Such a situation, on the one hand, leads to flooding during normal rainfall due to stagnation, and on the other hand leads to drought-like conditions due to the prevention of underground water storage. It is only that this situation was more magnified in Chennai, but other cities in India would echo these manifestations in varying degrees owing to a lack of sustainable urban planning.

There is also the example, in Mumbai, in 2019, when 2,141 trees were felled at the Aarey colony, amid massive protests, to make space for a shed for the Mumbai Metro Rail Corporation Limited.

Need for synergy

If the Government is serious about addressing the water crisis in urban areas, the Ministry of Water Resources must reconfigure its relationship with other Ministries and Departments (Urban Development, Local Self-Government and Environment). This would be for enhanced integration and coordi-

nation through effective land and water zoning regulations that protect urban water bodies, groundwater sources, wetlands and green cover while simultaneously working to enhance waste water recycling and water recharge activities targeting aquifers and wells through rainwater harvesting.

Lessons from rural Punjab

In rural areas, the situation is no different, as the acute water crisis in Punjab shows. The draft report of the Central Ground Water Board concluded that Punjab would be reduced to a desert in 25 years if the extraction of its groundwater resources continues unabated; 82% of Punjab's land area has seen a huge decline in groundwater levels, wherein 109 out of 138 administrative blocks have been placed in the 'over-exploited' category. Groundwater extraction which was at 35% in the 1960s and 1970s, rose to 70% post the Green Revolution – a period which saw governments subsidising power for irrigation that left tubewells running for hours.

Concomitantly, cultivation of water intensive crops such as paddy have further aggravated water depletion, even turning water saline. Immediate measures need to be taken to manage and replenish groundwater, especially through participatory groundwater management approaches with its combination of water budgeting, aquifer recharging and community involvement.

Such an approach to water conservation again beckons new configurations between sectors and disciplines. At the sectoral level, the Ministries and Departments of water resources must coordinate efforts with their counterparts in agriculture, the environment and

rural development for greater convergence to achieve water and food security. At the disciplinary level, governance and management should increasingly interact and draw from the expertise of fields such as hydrology (watershed sustainability), hydrogeology (aquifer mapping and recharge) and agriculture sciences (water-sensitive crop choices and soil health). Again, the importance given to groundwater conservation should not ignore surface water conservation including the many rivers and lakes which are in a critical and dying state due to encroachment, pollution, over-abstraction and obstruction of water flow by dams.

Protecting resources

The Ministry of Jal Shakti, last year, had announced an ambitious plan to provide water connections to every household in India by 2024. In view of the ongoing erosion of water resources and an ever-increasing demand for water, the thrust should not be on promising water supply. Instead the aim should be towards protecting and conserving water resources on the one hand and minimising and enhancing efficiency of water usage on the other. As the expert committee constituted under the Union Water Resources Ministry drafts a new National Water Policy, one hopes it would be rooted in locus specific realities and allows greater flexibility for integrating the insights and work of multiple departments and disciplines making way for new configurations to sustainably manage the country's water resources.

Thomas Varghese is a researcher and consultant working on sustainable development in Kochi, Kerala

India will achieve net zero emissions by 2070, says PM

Renewable energy will be tapped in a big way, Modi tells COP26 summit

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT
NEW DELHI

India will achieve net zero emissions latest by 2070, Prime Minister Narendra Modi said at the COP26 summit in Glasgow on Monday. Until Monday, India was the only major emitter that had not committed to a timeline to achieve net zero, or a year by which it would ensure its net carbon dioxide emissions would be zero.

By 2030, India will ensure 50% of its energy will be sourced from renewable sources. India also committed to reduce its carbon emissions until 2030 by a billion tonnes. India will also reduce its emissions intensity per unit of GDP by less than 45%. India would also



Green push: Prime Minister Narendra Modi arriving for the COP26 summit in Glasgow, Scotland, on Monday. •AP

install systems to generate 500 gigawatt of renewable energy by 2030, a 50 GW increase from its existing target, the Prime Minister said.

He added that in the spirit of climate justice, rich deve-

loped countries ought to be providing at least \$1 trillion in climate finance to assist developing countries and those most vulnerable.

'India will achieve net zero emissions by 2070'

Mr. Modi's statements were in contrast to India's run-up to the COP where it had strongly resisted demands by developed countries to take on net zero targets.

Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav had on Sunday said that principles of Equity and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) and, recognition of the very different national circumstances of countries be respected. Taking on net zero targets, requires a sharp shift to clean energy sources that several experts have opined, will impose a steep cost.

Earlier speaking at a side-event at the COP, Mr Modi

said there had not been as much focus on climate adaptation as much as mitigation and that is an injustice against developing nations.

There are changes in cropping patterns, there are floods and a great need to make agriculture resilient to these shocks, he added.

Mr Modi said sustainable modes of living being practised in certain traditional communities ought to be made part of school curricula and the lessons from India's efforts at adaptation in programmes such as Jal Jeevan mission, Swachh Bharat mission and mission Ujwala ought to be popularized globally.

Rescue guide launched for Ganges river dolphin

The mammals often get stranded in irrigation canals

SHIV SAHAY SINGH
KOLKATA

The Jal Shakti Ministry on Monday released a guide for the safe rescue and release of stranded Ganges river dolphins. The document has been prepared by the Turtle Survival Alliance and the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Department (EFCCD) of the Uttar Pradesh Government. The guide has been drawn from years of experience of rescuing 25 Ganges river dolphins stranded in irrigation canals.

The Ganges river dolphin is the national aquatic animal of India and is listed as 'endangered' under the IUCN Red List Assessments, Schedule I of the Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972), Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade



Ganges river dolphins are listed as 'endangered' on the IUCN Red list.

in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The species, whose global population is estimated at 4,000, is mostly found in the Indian subcontinent. The dolphins often accidentally enter canals in northern India and are unable to swim up against the gradient. They are also vulnerable to harm by people.

The manual is endorsed

by the IUCN Cetacean Specialist Group.

Best practices on crowd control, dolphin capture from canals and handling, transfer, transport and release are part of the guide.

"Found throughout the Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna and Karnaphuli-Sangu river systems of Nepal, India and Bangladesh, the Ganges river dolphin [*Platanista gangetica gangetica*] is a global priority and is also an indicator of healthy aquatic systems," said Shailendra Singh, director of Turtle Survival Alliance, India.

The guide was also simultaneously released via local fishermen at the Ghaghra river, a prime habitat where most of the rescued dolphins were released in the past few years.

Kashmir's fragility has more complex reasons

To limit what is happening in J&K solely to the impetus created by a Talibanised Afghanistan could cost India dear



M.K. NARAYANAN

Fear is the prevailing sentiment across many parts of Kashmir today. It has, in turn, led to comparisons with the situation that existed during the 1990s and the early years of the 21st century. In the past few weeks, several civilians as well as security and armed forces personnel, have been killed by terrorists, some of the latter being labelled as hybrid terrorists, though it is not clear what this phrase signifies.

Ground realities

A predictable reaction to the situation has been the exodus of Hindus, especially of the Kashmiri Pandits, and of migrant labour, fearing for their lives and their future. Side by side with this, an impression has been created of increasing support to militancy, though it is unclear whether this is indeed the case. However, as in all situations of this kind, it is apparent that impressions often appear more real than actual ground realities.

Latterly, Kashmir had managed to stay away from the headlines despite concerns expressed in different quarters about the 'disciplined democracy' being practised ever since the dilution of Article 370 and the restructuring of the erstwhile State of Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) into two Union Territories. In the absence of an agile press, it has not been possible to fathom the intensity of protests against the existing order, and whether they constitute a rejection of the changes effected.

Incidents of violence have, however, continued. Notwithstanding this, given the hullabaloo in the immediate aftermath of the changes effected in August 2019, a degree of surface calm seemed to prevail, not very different from that which existed previously. Whether this was peace brought

about through controlled conditions, or otherwise, has been difficult to discern.

Given the recent recrudescence of violence, it is, nevertheless, evident that the situation remains fragile. Whether this means that the changes effected since August 2019 were merely a 'triumph of wishfulness over prudence', an overestimation of belief on what was possible ignoring the history of several decades past, and the failure of many previous attempts to change the *status quo*, is hence worth examining.

Pakistan apart

More important is what could possibly be the reasons for the revival of aggravated violence in Kashmir. While assessing the ground situation in Kashmir, Pakistan has always tended to be a factor. It is, however, again possible that the lessons of the past on what needed to be done – to effectively checkmate insurgency from across the border or inflame Kashmiri opinion – might have gone unheeded in the euphoria of having succeeded in altering the character of J&K and Delhi establishing a degree of direct control. Promises made and an unwillingness to use the time and opportunity to create fresh opportunities for dialogue with communities in Kashmir, allied with reputational interest in not accepting that the many steps taken, were inadequate to defeat the machinations from across the border, could also, perhaps, be additional reasons.

By this reckoning, Kashmir might well seem, in some remote way, to reveal the same attitude as many post-conflict, pre-modern, hybrid societies with mixed populations. It would imply that in the case of Kashmir, making a transformation to a more stable society will always prove difficult. In addition, Kashmir has difficult neighbours such as Afghanistan, Pakistan and China, which leaves little scope for experimentation – a true test for decision-making of any kind.

As violence escalated in J&K, it became commonplace to link it with the Taliban takeover of Af-



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

ghanistan. This could, however, be a highly simplistic answer to a more complex situation. In the current context, geopolitics is something that cannot and must not be ignored. The sudden surge in violence in Kashmir needs a more careful evaluation of the facts rather than simplistic answers. It is a fact, for instance, that India's world view has steadily expanded, especially in the Asia-Pacific region, and several, including some relatively unknown, tension points have emerged. All these will need to be carefully assessed before coming up with an answer – more so since India is wedged between two known antagonists (Pakistan and China), has a Talibanised Afghanistan as its neighbour, and there has been a resurgence of international terror groups, notably the Islamic State and al-Qaeda.

The China factor

Of particular consequence in this context is China's continuing cooperation with Pakistan in many matters, its growing assertiveness in regard to its territorial claims, *vis-à-vis* India, its opposition to the prominence given to India by the West in both Asian and global forums, etc. All these have further helped cement the nexus between China and Pakistan. Intertwined with this is again the battle raging for spheres of influence between China and India, which has intensified under China's President Xi Jinping. The latter is intent on establishing an Asian system in which China sits at the summit of a hierarchical re-

gional order. All this is altering the ground realities and it is worth considering whether Kashmir is emerging as a pressure point in this context.

Intelligence is critical

What it all boils down to is the need for hard and better intelligence. Hard intelligence is critical to avoid misperceptions and miscalculations. The (recent) history of the world is replete with stories of intelligence failures, misperceptions and miscalculations, which had led to grave situations, and which might well have been avoided had there been better intelligence. The serious miscalculation about Iraqi President Saddam Hussein possessing nuclear weapons based on wrong intelligence led to unnecessary involvement by the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Iraq, followed by an unfortunate train of events that continues to haunt the world to this day. As tensions between India and China, and between India and Pakistan, intensify, the need for hard intelligence is thus vital to be able to control the train of events and avoid any serious miscalculations.

What is common to most, perhaps all, intelligence agencies – irrespective of their degrees of competence – is their limited capacity for imagination, *viz.*, to imagine future events and possibilities. Intelligence agencies, by and large, are adept at providing insights about yesterday's threats rather than future ones, specially those that exist just beyond the horizon. Moreover, as intelligence agencies become more wedded to technology, they need to realise that advances in technology tend to be a double-edged sword insofar as intelligence is concerned. It should not negate the need for improved analysis and also how important it is to provide decision-makers with information on what is taking place in the minds of their opposite numbers.

In the extant situation, Indian intelligence agencies must avoid the kind of lapses of both imagination and analysis displayed by western intelligence agencies

some years ago, who misread, misunderstood and failed to anticipate the role of Sayyid Qutb and his preachings which later set the stage for the 9/11 attack on the Twin Towers in New York and other targets in the U.S. Had they understood what Sayyid Qutb preached, *viz.*, that martyrdom was a necessary part of 20th century jihad, they would not have underestimated the influence exerted by Islamist theology on the terrorist mindset.

It is, thus, important that the 'missing dimensions' of intelligence in most cases, *viz.*, thinking imaginatively and improved analytical capabilities, receive the close attention of India's intelligence agencies. Only then will it be possible to understand the nature of current events as a precursor of future threats. This is important to ensure that they do not ignore signals that may not be all too obvious at this time, and keep chasing more obvious and current aspects. Too narrowly focused intelligence requirements, limited to current events such as, for example, tensions with China on the border, or Pakistan's attempts to push in 'irregulars' and aid the Lashkar and Jaish elements to cross over into India, may prove self-defeating. The arc of intelligence needs to be much wider and Indian intelligence agencies such as the Intelligence Bureau, the Research & Analysis Wing as also the National Security Council Secretariat should ensure that they have the necessary capabilities.

Linked to this is also the danger of 'intelligence adjustment', *viz.*, avoiding challenging conventional assumptions, which could undermine their ability to provide a more accurate picture of the larger threat. Today, when India faces problems all around it, to limit what is happening in Kashmir solely to the impetus created by a Talibanised Afghanistan without fully analysing all the facts could cost the country dear.

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U.K. vows action if France does not back down in fishing row

‘The French have made completely unreasonable threats’

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON

Britain on Monday warned France it will take action if Paris does not withdraw “unreasonable” threats to impose trade measures in an increasingly acrimonious row over post-Brexit fishing rights.

President Emmanuel Macron said on Sunday that Britain must give ground in the dispute or France will trigger trade reprisals on Tuesday, saying: “The ball is in Britain’s court.”

But Britain’s Foreign Secretary Liz Truss told Sky News on Monday that “we will use the mechanisms of our trade agreement with the EU to take action” if Mr. Macron goes ahead with his plans. “The French have made completely unreasonable threats, including to the

Channel Islands and to our fishing industry, and they need to withdraw those threats,” she said.

“If somebody behaves unfairly in a trade deal you’re entitled to take action against them and seek some compensatory measures. And that is what we will do if the French don’t back down.”

Angry Paris

France is angry that Britain and the Channel Islands of Jersey and Guernsey have not issued some French boats with licences to fish in their waters since Brexit took full effect at the start of 2021.

Paris has vowed that, unless licences are approved, it will ban U.K. boats from unloading their catches at French ports from Tuesday

and impose checks on all products brought to France from Britain.

Jersey’s Minister for External Relations Ian Gorst said on Monday that his officials had followed the terms of the Brexit deal, which stipulates that boats should only be granted licences if evidence is presented that they fished in the waters before 2016. “We’ve really tumbled over ourselves to be as engaging and as reasonable as possible,” he told Sky News.

Britain’s Prime Minister Boris Johnson complained to EU chief Ursula von der Leyen on Saturday that French threats over fishing were “completely unjustified” as he held out the option of invoking the Brexit dispute tool for the first time, drawing the EU itself into the row.

General Studies Paper I	
A	History of Indian culture will cover the salient aspects of art forms, literature and architecture from ancient to modern times;
B	Modern Indian history from about the middle of the eighteenth century until the present-significant events, personalities, issues;
C	Freedom struggle-its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country;
D	Post-independence consolidation and reorganization within the country;
E	History of the world will include events from 18 th century such as industrial revolution, world wars, re-drawing of national boundaries, colonization, decolonization,
F	Political philosophies like communism, capitalism, socialism etc.-their forms and effect on the society
G	Salient features of Indian Society, Diversity of India;
H	Effects of globalization on Indian society;
I	Role of women and women's organization;
J	Social empowerment, communalism, regionalism & secularism
K	Salient features of world's physical geography;
L	Geographical features and their location- changes in critical geographical features (including water bodies and ice-caps) and in flora and fauna and the effects of such changes;
M	Important Geophysical phenomena such as earthquakes, Tsunami, Volcanic activity, cyclone etc.
N	Distribution of key natural resources across the world (including South Asia and the Indian subcontinent);
O	Factors responsible for the location of primary, secondary, and tertiary sector industries in various parts of the world (including India);
P	Population and associated issues;
Q	Urbanization, their problems and their remedies
General Studies Paper II	
A	India and its neighbourhood- relations;
B	Important International institutions, agencies and fora- their structure, mandate;
C	Effect of policies and politics of developed and developing countries on India's interests;
D	Bilateral, regional and global groupings and agreements involving India and/or affecting India's interests.
E	Indian Constitution, historical underpinnings, evolution, features, amendments, significant provisions and basic structure;
F	Comparison of the Indian Constitutional scheme with other countries;
G	Functions and responsibilities of the Union and the States, issues and challenges pertaining to the federal structure, devolution of powers and finances up to local levels and challenges therein; Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
H	Parliament and State Legislatures - structure, functioning, conduct of business, powers & privileges and issues arising out of these;
I	Structure, organization and functioning of the executive and the judiciary, Ministries and Departments;

J	Separation of powers between various organs dispute redressal mechanisms and institutions;
K	Appointment to various Constitutional posts, powers, functions and responsibilities of various Constitutional bodies;
L	Statutory, regulatory and various quasi-judicial bodies;
M	Mechanisms, laws, institutions and bodies constituted for the protection and betterment of these vulnerable sections;
N	Salient features of the Representation of People's Act;
O	Important aspects of governance, transparency and accountability, e-governance- applications, models, successes, limitations, and potential;
P	Citizens charters, transparency & accountability and institutional and other measures;
Q	Issues relating to poverty and hunger,
R	Welfare schemes for vulnerable sections of the population by the Centre and States, Performance of these schemes;
S	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to education and human resources;
T	Issues relating to development and management of social sector / services relating to health
General Studies Paper III	
A	Indian Economy and issues relating to planning, mobilization of resources, growth, development and employment;
B	Effects of liberalization on the economy, changes in industrial policy and their effects on industrial growth;
C	Inclusive growth and issues arising from it;
D	Infrastructure Energy, Ports, Roads, Airports, Railways etc. Government budgeting;
E	Land reforms in India
F	Major crops, cropping patterns in various parts of the country, different types of irrigation and irrigation systems;
G	Storage, transport and marketing of agricultural produce and issues and related constraints;
H	e-technology in the aid of farmers; Technology Missions; Economics of Animal-Rearing.
I	Issues of buffer stocks and food security, Public Distribution System- objectives, functioning, limitations, revamping;
J	Food processing and related industries in India – scope and significance, location, upstream and downstream requirements, supply chain management;
K	Issues related to direct and indirect farm subsidies and minimum support prices
L	Awareness in the fields of IT, Space, Computers, robotics, nano-technology, bio-technology;
M	Indigenization of technology and developing new technology;
N	Developments and their applications and effects in everyday life;
O	Issues relating to intellectual property rights
P	Conservation, environmental pollution and degradation, environmental impact assessment
Q	Disaster and disaster management
R	Challenges to internal security through communication networks, role of media and social networking sites in internal security challenges, basics of cyber security;
S	Money-laundering and its prevention;

T	Various forces and their mandate;
U	Security challenges and their management in border areas;
V	Linkages of organized crime with terrorism;
W	Role of external state and non-state actors in creating challenges to internal security;
X	Linkages between development and spread of extremism.
General Studies Paper IV	
A	Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in human actions;
B	Dimensions of ethics;
C	Ethics in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators;
D	Role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.
E	Attitude: Content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour;
F	Moral and political attitudes;
G	Social influence and persuasion.
H	Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service , integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker sections.
I	Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.
J	Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.
K	Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems;
L	Ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions;
M	Laws, rules, regulations and conscience as
N	sources of ethical guidance;
O	Accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding;
P	Corporate governance.
Q	Probity in Governance: Concept of public service;
R	Philosophical basis of governance and probity;
S	Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.
T	Case Studies on above issues.