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BLACK MONEY

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 18, 2014

Black money info cannot be disclosed to all: Centre

The Centre on Friday told the Supreme Court (SC) that it could not disclose the names of those who have deposited money in banks abroad as it this would jeopardise tax agreements with nations providing those names to India.

This echoes the line taken by the previous UPA government, which the BJP had slammed and made into an election issue earlier this year while promising to bring black money back if elected to power.

HT Column: [The grey areas in recovering black money](#)

Appearing before a bench headed by Chief Justice HL Dattu, Attorney General Mukul Rohatgi said that all amounts deposited in foreign banks by Indian citizens cannot be termed black money and that it is not a crime to open such accounts.

Senior advocate Ram Jethmalani, petitioner in the case before the SC, accused the government of protecting those who had stashed black money abroad and urged the court not to entertain the application.

But observers said that Jethmalani, who was expelled from the BJP, was politicising the matter to settle scores, and even his own advocate-on-record Raian Karanjawala decided to quit the case.

Read: [Congress attack Modi on black money issue](#)

“We have indicated that we will be giving a no-objection certificate in the matter (to Jethmalani to engage some other advocate-on-record) and are withdrawing from the case,” Karanjawala said. All cases in the SC have to be filed through advocates-on-record.

The SC had in May given the Centre an ultimatum to constitute a Special Investigation Team to probe black money cases. It also ordered the Centre to disclose the identity of 26 persons who had bank accounts in the tax haven Liechtenstein.

On Friday, the government told the court that if it revealed the names as the SC had directed, foreign countries may not give India further information and it would also be difficult to get into double taxation avoidance agreements (DTAA) with other nations due to confidentiality considerations.

The Centre’s stand drew a strong response from the Congress. “This is not only a hiatus between the words and deeds of BJP but sheer hypocrisy and dishonesty with the public of India,” said Congress spokesman Abhishek Manu Singhvi.

Finance minister Arun Jaitley rejected any notion that the BJP was reluctant to make the names public.

“We have no difficulty in making names public. But they can be made public only in accordance with due process of law,” he said. “And the due process of law has been constrained by DTAA which was entered into between India and Germany when the Congress Party was in power on June 19, 1995,” he told reporters.

The Centre also wants the SC to make it clear that its direction would not prohibit the Centre from signing treaties which include a provision on maintaining confidentiality. It has even asked for a declaration that the right to privacy is an integral part of the right to life and such information cannot be disclosed unless a wrongdoing is found on the basis of an Income Tax complaint.

The government told the court that its order was coming in the way of India's India signing a proposed Inter Governmental Agreement (IGA) with the US that needed to be signed by December end as failure to do so would lead to serious implications on financial institutions.

The court fixed October 28 to hear the matter.

BUSINESS STANDARD, OCT 16, 2014

Switzerland to provide timely info on black money

In a major breakthrough in India's fight against **black money** allegedly stashed abroad, **Switzerland** on Wednesday said it will examine Indian requests for banking information on a priority basis and provide requested details in a time-bound manner.

The Swiss authorities would also "assist in obtaining confirmation on genuineness of bank documents on request by the Indian side and also swiftly provide information on requests related to non-banking information".

"... the Swiss competent authority will provide the Indian side with the requested information in a time-bound manner or else indicate the reasons why the cases cannot be answered within the agreed timeline," a Swiss-Indian joint statement said after a high-level meeting between the official of the two countries on tax matters. The meeting took place in Berne between revenue secretary Shaktikanta Das and his Swiss counterpart, state secretary for international financial matters, Jacques de Watteville.

They discussed various bilateral and multilateral tax and financial issues and also agreed on continuing the dialogue between the two countries, a statement from **Swiss government** said.

Das stressed on the high priority given by India to tackling tax evasion, while the top officials of the two countries also welcomed the recent developments in the field of international taxation.

CHILD LABOUR

BUSINESS STANDARD, OCT 18, 2014

Devangshu Datta: Our dangerous dependence on child labour

Street dogs, roadside stalls, household help, free home delivery, human-powered rickshaws and handcarts. Much more than the dry statistics of per capita income, these things distinguish the [Third World](#) (TW) from the First World (FW).

[Middle-class](#) folks with a foot in both worlds must balance off the conveniences and inconveniences of one versus the other. The FW offers far better amenities, such as 24X7 clean running water, stable electricity, decent public transport, etc. The TW conveniences all revolve around cheap labour.

An "expensive" haircut and a shave in an upmarket Delhi salon costs less than \$5 - less than a tenth of similar quality service in the FW. A middle-class TW citizen can hire help to hand-wash underwear, shine and lace up shoes, and fetch glasses of water, not to mention cooking, cleaning, walking pets, driving, paying bills and generally keeping house.

The *kirana* stores employ kids who will deliver even a single loaf of bread. The electrician, the plumber, the mechanic and the computer-assembly guys are all available on call and cheap. The local cabbies are on call 24X7 and they give old customers credit. Desis miss these things sorely in the FW. The gulf in the cost of such services is vast, as Ms Khobragade sadly discovered.

There are multiple downsides to living in the Third World, of course. The TW denizens endure air and noise pollution, chaotic traffic, poor public transport, power cuts, on-off water supply, poor garbage disposal, endless corruption and red tape, and so on. One can only hope that development and growth will help alleviate these problems.

But the cheap labour will disappear along the way, as incomes rise and [education](#) penetrates. That is inevitable. Third World labour is cheap because there is a vast pool of poor, under-skilled, under-educated people forced to perform menial tasks. Nobody likes cleaning loos or washing undies, and people opt out of doing these things for a living, if they can get paid to do other things.

As poverty reduces, and education permeates down to lower-income groups and across gender, fewer people will end up forced to clean loos for a living. The costs of all labour-intensive services, and especially of skilled services, will rise sharply.

The TW barber, mechanic, mason, carpenter, plumber or electrician learns the trade by being apprenticed as a 12-year-old (often to respective fathers). In the FW, these services are provided by somebody who opted to learn skills in a polytechnic, or a TW immigrant. The FW service providers price their expertise much, much higher.

[Child labour](#) is cheap and it helps to create a permanent pool of under-skilled people because the child also misses out on education. Even as an adult, that individual will provide cheap labour. Gender disparities in education also differentiate the TW and the FW. The TW women lag far behind in every stage, from literacy, to years of schooling, to college enrolment. Again, this helps create a permanent pool of cheap, under-skilled labour.

If child labour is outlawed, or reduced in scope and regulated, the pool of cheap labour will become smaller. If gender disparities are eroded with more women being better-educated, that pool also becomes smaller. My *bai*'s daughter is training as a beautician. My *durwan*'s daughter is studying computer science. I don't think either of those girls will clean floors, or wash clothes, for a living.

The subcontinent will become both more equitable and more prosperous, if girls are allowed to study and women to work outside the home, even as children are removed from the workforce. The [Nobel Peace Prize](#) sends powerful signals.

If recognition of [Malala Yousafzai](#) and [Kailash Satyarthi](#) helps spark broad reforms, it will accelerate the processes of getting girls into school and kids out of workplaces. But don't be surprised if middle-class whining about the difficulty of getting good help also rises in volume if these hugely desirable outcomes come to pass.

CIVIL SERVICE

DECCAN HERALD, OCT 16, 2014

Mayaram transferred from Finance Ministry, made Tourism secy

In first major Secretary-level shuffle by the Narendra Modi-government, Finance Secretary Arvind Mayaram has been transferred out of the Finance Ministry to a low profile Tourism Ministry.

Mayaram, who was senior most among the four Secretaries in the Ministry of Finance with dual roles as finance and economic affairs secretary, was appointed by the previous government and has one-full year before he retires on October 31, 2015.

He has now been made the Tourism secretary. He has been replaced by his batchmate from 1978-batch Rajiv Mehrishi, who currently is the Chief Secretary of Rajasthan. Mehrishi retires in August-end and will have just about 10 months at Ministry of Finance.

In all, 20 new appointments were made yesterday, one-third being at the Secretary level.

Anil Swarup, a 1981 batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as the new Coal Secretary. Swarup, who is Additional Secretary in the Cabinet Secretariat, has been Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of Coal and will take over as Coal Secretary when incumbent S K Srivastava retires on October 31.

In orders issued yesterday, Mayaram, a 1978-batch IAS officer belonging to Rajasthan cadre, was made the Tourism Secretary in place of Parvez Dewan on his retirement at month end.

In his place, Rajiv Mehrishi, an IAS officer of the same batch as Mayaram and from the same state, was appointed Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance.

Ministry of Finance has four secretaries - Economic Affairs, Expenditure, Revenue and Financial Services. The senior most among the four is designated Finance Secretary.

Presently, Ratan P Watal, a 1978 batch IAS officer from Andhra Pradesh is Expenditure Secretary while 1980-batch IAS officer of Rajasthan cadre Gurdial Singh Sandhu is the Financial Services Secretary. Shaktikanta Das, an IAS officer of 1980 batch from Tamil Nadu cadre, is Revenue Secretary.

Mayaram's transfer was part of the first major Secretary- level reshuffle undertaken by the Modi government.

The Appointments Committee of Cabinet has approved appointment of Swarup as Officer on Special Duty in the Ministry of Coal in the rank and pay of Secretary, a press release issued today by the Department of Personnel and Training said.

Alok Rawat, a 1977 batch IAS officer of Sikkim cadre, has been appointed new secretary in the Department of Administrative Reforms & Public Grievances and Department of Pensions and Pensioners Welfare. Rawat is presently Secretary in Ministry of Water Resources, River Development and Ganga Rejuvenation, it said.

Prabhu Dayal Meena, a 1980 batch IAS officer of Madhya Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as Secretary in the Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare.

Meena, who is presently Special Secretary in Department of Land Resources, will replace Sangita Gairola, who retires this month-end, the release said.

Anuj Kumar Bishnoi, a 1981 batch IAS officer of Uttar Pradesh cadre, has been appointed as Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation. Bishnoi is presently Additional Secretary in the Department of Defence.

Ashok Kumar Angurana, a 1980 batch IAS officer of Jammu and Kashmir cadre, has been appointed as Secretary in Ministry of Panchayati Raj. Angurana is presently working as Managing Director, TRIFED, Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

The government has appointed Vinod Agrawal, a 1980 batch IAS officer of Jharkhand cadre, as Secretary in National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC). Agrawal is presently working as Advisor, Inter State Council Secretariat under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

DECCAN HERALD, OCT 17, 2014

Karnataka bureaucrats spar in public

Bureaucrats in the Siddaramaiah government have taken to washing dirty linen in public.

On Thursday, IAS officer Rashmi V Mahesh of the 1996 batch, who is the Director-General of Administrative Training Institute (ATI), Mysore, sought the aid of the media to attack her senior, and predecessor Amita Prasad (1985 batch), against whom she has already lodged a complaint.

Rashmi, who has pressed for a CBI probe into alleged irregularities in the ATI, said the extent of the scam was close to Rs 100 crore, during Amita Prasad's tenure.

Rashmi said the assault on her at the ATI on Wednesday following the death of a gazetted manager was pre-meditated. It was a fallout of her attempts to check rampant corruption in the institute. In her complaint lodged with the police late on Wednesday, she held the employees of Bharani Catering, Bangalore, who she said had benefited from irregularities at ATI, responsible for the attack.

She complained of facing hostilities from some employees as accountability was increased and leakage of funds were reduced.

“Their latent thoughts were inflamed by the fact that the former DG (Amita Prasad) continued to retain and use the official DG quarters and she would conduct meetings of all disgruntled staff, tenderers and officials.

Further, on and off, during the last two weeks the former DG and her husband and ADGP Intelligence A M Prasad were living at ATI. It is but a strange coincidence that such an event occurs just a day after they formally vacated the DG quarters,” she said

Similarly, at a high level meeting at Chief Minister’s home office Krishna on Wednesday, Commerce and Industries department Additional Chief Secretary K Ratna Prabha had a heated argument with Agriculture Minister Krishna Byre Gowda and Chief Minister’s Additional Chief Secretary D N Narasimha Raju.

Ratna Prabha took exception to Gowda complaining to the chief minister of delay by her department in fixing compensation for land being acquired for industrial purpose in his home district Kolar. Ratna Prabha hit back at Gowda and said the price fixation committee was headed by district deputy commissioners and not her department.

The chief minister later pacified the officer. Earlier, during the meeting, tempers flared between Ratna Prabha and Narasimha Raju. Ratna Prabha, a senior IAS officer, objected to Raju obtaining information related to the Industries department directly from a subordinate officer.

Ratna Prabha asked him to follow the protocol of obtaining information from the department head. “I am responsible for all the issues as head of the department. What if the junior officer gives wrong information to the chief minister,” she said.

In May this year, then Additional director-general of Police, KSRP, P Ravindranath, had a public spat with then Bangalore Police Commissioner Raghavendra Auradkar.

After being accused of taking pictures of a woman at a Bangalore coffee shop, Ravindranath had charged Auradkar with hatching a conspiracy to malign him. He had even filed a case against Auradkar and another IPS officer B R Ravikanthe Gowda under the SC/ST Atrocities Prevention Act. Ravindranath had also publicly criticised ADGP Intelligence, A M Prasad, accusing him of treating him as a “dalit” and not as an IPS officer.

COAL MINING

HINDU, OCT 21, 2014

President promulgates Ordinance to allow e-auction of coal blocks

The move, seen as a step towards energy sector reforms, will allow private companies to bid for captive use and allot mines directly to State and Central public sector undertakings.

The e-auction of coal blocks for private companies on Tuesday got the nod from President Pranab Mukherjee who promulgated an Ordinance cleared by the Union Cabinet in the backdrop of Supreme Court order quashing 214 coal blocks to companies since 1993.

The move, seen as a step towards energy sector reforms, will allow private companies to bid for captive use and allot mines directly to State and Central public sector undertakings.

“The President has signed the ordinance,” his Press Secretary Venu Rajamony said in New Delhi.

The Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Monday evening recommended to the President the promulgation of an Ordinance in order to resolve the pending issues particularly the situation arising out of the Supreme Court judgement quashing the allocation of the coal blocks.

Following this Ordinance, state sector requirements including those of the Central and State governments would be met through government dispensation route and coal mines would be allocated to PSUs like NTPC or State electricity boards.

The government will put sufficient coal blocks on e-auction for the private sector players who are into the cement, steel and power sectors.

Union Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had said on Monday evening that the e-auction process will be “transparent” and completed in “three to four months” with proceeds going entirely to the State governments where the mines are located.

The biggest beneficiaries would be the eastern States like Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal and Chhattisgarh. States like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh would also benefit.

All companies, except those convicted by courts, will be allowed to participate in the auction and there will be no right of first refusal and all bidders will have to compete in the e-auction through reverse bidding.

The coal blocks, which were earlier allocated through a screening committee mechanism, became a political issue after Comptroller and Auditor-General (CAG) alleged arbitrariness and absence of any criteria in the screening process and pegged notional loss to the exchequer at Rs. 1.86 lakh crore.

The apex court had last month quashed allocation of 214 out of 218 coal blocks allotted to various companies since 1993, terming the method as “fatally flawed”.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

HINDU, OCT 16, 2014

The economic consequences of Nehru

PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

A call to burn history books has upped the ante as the 125th birth anniversary of Jawaharlal Nehru approaches. The trouble with history though is that it would be prudent for us to first learn its lessons lest we end up repeating our mistakes. As Nehru was India's longest serving Prime Minister, and both triumph as well as tragedy had accompanied his tenure, this is a fit occasion for a public debate on what had been attempted in the Nehru era and the extent of its success. I must per force confine myself to the economics. This, though would serve as a corrective to the tendency of political historians to most often concentrate on the other aspects of his leadership. For instance, Sarvepalli Gopal's noted three-volume biography bestows a single chapter on Nehru's economic policy. However, reading through the speeches of Nehru, we find that the economy had remained his continuing preoccupation even amidst the debates on social policy in the Lok Sabha and on decolonisation in the United Nations. Reading them is in any case advisable, as strongly held positions on the economy in the Nehru era have often been crowded in by ideological predilection when they have not been clouded over by ignorance.

Nehru-Mahalanobis strategy

The objective of the economic policy in the 1950s was to raise per capita income in the country via industrialisation. The vehicle for this was the Nehru-Mahalanobis strategy, the decision on this having been taken as early as 1938 by the National Planning Committee of the Congress constituted by Subhas Chandra Bose during his all-too-brief and ill-fated presidentship of the party. The committee was chaired by Nehru. The cornerstone of the strategy was to build machines as fast as possible as capital goods were seen as a basic input in all lines of production. While a mathematical model devised by Prasanta Chandra Mahalanobis had lent a formal status to the strategy, it was the so-called "plan frame" that had guided the allocation of spending. In retrospect, the allocation of investment across lines of production in the Second Five-Year Plan was quite balanced with attention given also to infrastructure, the building of which — given the state of the economy then — the public sector alone would have initiated.

The Nehru-Mahalanobis strategy had criticised even at the outset. I shall discuss two of the criticisms at this stage and turn to a third at a later stage. Thus, Vakil and Brahmananda argued that the Mahalanobis model neglected wage goods, being those consumed by workers who were the majority of the country. While important per se, in practical terms, this criticism turned out to be somewhat academic as the plan frame — as opposed to the model — had given due importance to agriculture. In fact, the Green Revolution which is dated from the late 1960s cannot entirely be divorced from the attention paid to agriculture in the Nehru era. The 'Grow More Food' campaign and the trials in the country's extended agricultural research network both contributed to it. Next,

B.R. Shenoy had famously dissented from his fellow economists by querying the use of controls as part of the planning process. Shenoy's is a well-known position in economic theory that the allocative efficiency of the competitive market-mechanism cannot be improved upon. While this is a useful corrective to ham-handed government intervention, it was known even by the 1950s that a free market need not necessarily take the economy to the next level. The Pax Britannica had been a time of free markets, though coated with political repression, and this had not helped India much during the two centuries since Plassey. Moreover, many of the extant controls were wartime controls that had not been rescinded. Investment licensing though was a central element in planning in India and Shenoy was right in identifying it as such.

An economy quickened

As the maxim "the proof of the pudding lies in the eating" must apply most closely to matters economic, the Nehru-Mahalanobis strategy can be considered only as good as its outcome. It had aimed to raise the rate of growth of the economy. With the distance that half a century affords us and the aid of superior statistical methods, we are now in the position to see that its early success was nothing short of spectacular. Depending upon your source, per capita income in India had either declined or stagnated during the period 1900-47. Over 1950-65, its growth was approximately 1.7 per cent. India's economy, which was no more than a colonial enclave for more than two centuries, had been quickened. It is made out that this quickening achieved in the 1950s was no great shakes as the initial level of income was low and a given increase in it would register a higher rate of growth than at a later stage in the progression. This confounds statistical description with economic assessment. It is a widely recognised feature of economic growth that every increase in wealth makes the next step that much easier to take due to increasing returns to scale. The principle works both ways, rendering the revival of an economy trapped at a low level of income that much more difficult. It is worth stating in the context that the acceleration of growth achieved in the 1950s has not been exceeded since. Also, that India grew faster than China in the Nehru era.

So if the Nehru-Mahalanobis strategy had led to such a good start, why were the early gains not sustained? The loss of an early vitality in the economy had to do partly with political economy and partly with a flaw in the strategy itself. The death of Nehru created a crisis of leadership in the Congress Party which was communicated to the polity. It took almost a decade-and-a-half for stability to be restored. The instability impacted the governance of the public sector, and public investment which had been the engine of growth since the early 1950s slowed. Additionally, the private corporate sector, which contrary to conventional wisdom had flourished under Nehru, was initially repressed by Indira Gandhi. Private investment collapsed. This held back the acceleration of economic growth.

Neglect of primary education

Even though we now have reason to believe that the mechanism of long-term growth that remains to this day, which is that of cumulative causation, had been ignited by the Nehru-

Mahalanobis strategy, the strategy itself was incomplete. This is best understood by reference to the Asian Development Model as it had played out in the economies of east Asia. These economies had pursued more or less the same strategy as India in that the state fostered industrialisation. But a glaring difference marks the Indian experience. This was the absence of a serious effort to build human capabilities via education and training. In the east this had taken the form of a spreading of schooling, vocational training and engineering education. In India, on the other hand, public spending on education had turned towards technical education at the tertiary level too early on. The slow spread of schooling ensured that the growth of productivity in the farm and the factory remained far too slow. Now the pace of poverty reduction also remained slow, and, via positive feedback, slowed the expansion of demand needed for faster growth of the economy.

It is intriguing that the issue of schooling did not figure majorly among India's planners, especially as it was a part of Gandhi's Constructive Programme. This had not gone unnoticed even at that time. B.V. Krishnamurthi, then at Bombay University, had pointed out that the priorities of the Second Five-Year Plan undergirded by the Mahalanobis model were skewed. He castigated it for a bias toward "river-valley projects," reflected in the paltry sums allocated to education. But it was the argument advanced by him for why spending on schooling matters that was prescient. He argued that education would enable Indians to attend to their livelihood themselves without relying on the government, thus lightening the economic burden of the latter, presumably leaving it to build more capital goods in the long run as envisaged in the Mahalanobis model. But this was not to be, with enormous consequences for not only the economy but also the effectiveness of democracy in India.

While the failure to initiate a programme of building the capabilities of the overwhelming majority of our people is a moral failure of colossal proportions, we would be missing the wood for the trees if we do not recognise the economic significance of the short Nehru era in the long haul of India's history. It was path-breaking in that a moribund economy had been quickened. This would have been the precondition for most changes in a country with unacceptably low levels of per capita income. It is yet to be demonstrated how this could have been achieved in the absence of the economic strategy navigated through a democratic polity by Jawaharlal Nehru.

(Pulapre Balakrishnan can be reached through www.pulaprebalakrishnan.in)

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While the failure to initiate a programme of building the capabilities of a majority of Indians is a moral failure, we would be missing the larger perspective if we do not recognise the economic significance of the short Nehru era in the long haul of India's history

EDUCATION

BUSINESS STANDARD, OCT 16, 2014

Nalanda University to provide free education to poor, says Sen

Nalanda University will arrange for funds through its own sources to pay for fees of the students of poor economic background upon admission

The [Nalanda University](#) will provide [free education](#) to [poor students](#) if they qualify on the parameters of the varsity, its Chancellor Prof [Amartya Sen](#) said today.

The students of poor economic background interested in studying at the Nalanda University will be provided free education if they qualify on the parameters of excellence to be decided by the University, Sen told reporters. The Nalanda University will arrange for funds through its own sources to pay for fees of the students of poor economic background upon admission, but such students will have to qualify the entrance test, Sen said.

The Nalanda University Chancellor, who is also a Nobel laureate in economics, was here to visit the campus and also met the students and faculty members of the University which had begun its classes last month. Sen asked the students about their objectives for studying in the University and atmosphere here and quizzed them about their confidence level on meeting their academic target.

HINDU, OCT 22, 2014

Delhi University revokes its revaluation system

VIJETHA S. N.

Fresh admissions on the cards for erstwhile FYUP students who had failed

Delhi University's students who had no recourse to deal with allegedly "unfair marking" can rest assured this Diwali as the university is revoking its revaluation system. All the four-year undergraduate students who had failed and were left to fend for themselves when the university reverted to the three-year programme this July, also have reason to cheer with the university announcing that it is willing to carry out fresh admissions for them.

These developments were clarified by the university's Joint Registrar (Academics) Ram Dutt on Monday.

"The revaluation of answer sheets because of the introduction of checking of answer sheets... by multiple examiners will be reverted and the answer sheets will be examined by a single examiner," said a notification issued by the university.

The university had withdrawn the option of revaluation when it introduced the semester system about three years ago.

“The students who failed in the first year and could not take admissions due to various reasons will be allowed to be re-admitted into the first year. The attendance of such students will be counted from the date of their admission,” said the notification on the readmission of the failed students. An undertaking will also have to be supplied by the affected students that they will not make a claim for any loss of teaching hours and also that they will make up for the courses that have already taken place so far, by themselves.

Internal assessment, which was a key factor in the FYUP also, has weightage in the three-year course. And this will be conducted by whichever college reinstates the student. Also, the failed students who were admitted by mistake to the second year will be readmitted to the first year and the fees that were already collected from them will be adjusted.

The announcement on Monday also made it clear that these steps were being taken only because the university had received a lot of representations from affected students as well as the students’ union.

“The option of revaluation had been changed into ‘re-checking’, which was merely re-totalling of marks. Due to this, thousands of students had been suffering for no fault of theirs. The university had been arguing that the answer sheets in the semester system were being evaluated by three teachers but the reality was that the three teachers usually divided portions of the question paper among themselves and no section of the paper was evaluated twice,” said Saket Bahuguna, the State secretary of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad which controls the Delhi University Students’ Union.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2014

25% seats reserved for transgender kids in Delhi schools

Transgender kids can now take admission in schools across the national capital and pursue their studies along with other students free of cost.

Delhi's Lt Governor Najeeb Jung has notified their inclusion within the meaning of children belonging to 'disadvantaged category' under the Right to Education (RTE) Act, following which they would now be eligible for 25% reservation under the economically weaker section (EWS) and disadvantaged students for admission.

"In exercise of the powers conferred by Clause D of Section 2 of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (35 of 2009) (RTE Act), the Lt-Governor of Delhi is pleased to notify inclusion of a 'transgender' child within the meaning of 'child belonging to disadvantaged group' as defined in the said section of the RTE Act applicable to all schools situated within the National Capital Territory of Delhi," said the notification issued by the Directorate of Education (DoE).

The Health department will be issuing the required certificate to ascertain the gender and admission to schools will be based on that, said a Delhi government official.

There are around 4.9 lakh transgenders in the country, according to Census 2011.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2014

PM Modi to take clean mission to schools

Zia Haq

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is planning a bigger-than-usual Children's Day on November 14, Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday, when he is likely to launch yet another cleanliness campaign – one aimed solely at schoolchildren.

The mission, which officials have branded Bal Swachh Abhiyaan, is likely to see Modi make a signature, high-pitched public commemoration of another national icon: the country's first prime minister and one of the Opposition Congress's tallest leaders.

Last month, Modi chose the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi to kick-start Swachh Bharat, a nationwide drive to clean public spaces.

Top officials in Delhi are preparing to replicate the campaign's successful launch, reaching out to all states to enable millions of children to participate in cleaning up playgrounds, homes, schools and toilets on November 14.

Modi has called for a government plan to build public toilets in every school in a country where more than half of the 1.2-billion population does not have access to toilets. According to a World Bank study, the burden from lack of toilets and hygiene-related diseases cuts 2% of India's potential GDP.

“Children can play a very important role in achieving Swachh Bharat by 2019,” sanitation secretary Vijaylaxmi Joshi wrote to all chief secretaries, asking them to undertake programmes at all levels, including districts and gram panchayats, or village-level councils, on that day.

“A pledge to be taken on the occasion by all children of the country is being prepared,” the letter from the Centre informing states about the campaign said.

In his Independence Day speech this year, Modi called for a cleaner India by October 2, 2019, in time for Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary, and sought to set an example by working the broom. The campaign, one melding nationalism with civic pride, is reminiscent of Singapore's first prime minister Lee Kuan Yew's drive to modernise the city-state on an ethos of cleanliness.

ENVIRONMENT

BUSINESS STANDARD, OCT 18, 2014

Cleaning Yamuna to cost extra Rs 4,000 crore: Delhi govt

Secondary sewage line required while implementation of primary network may take 2 decades

Somesh Jha

Cleaning the [Yamuna](#) river will require an additional Rs 4,000 crore over three years, the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) has said in a detailed action plan to the [National Green Tribunal](#) this week and approved by the Union [environment](#) ministry.

[DDA](#) said the sewage master plan of 2013 had been "suitably modified" to ensure the sewage is intercepted before it flows into the river Yamuna. This will require laying out a secondary sewage line while the implementation of the primary sewage network may take up to two decades, according to the Delhi Jal Board. This "prioritized work" it has identified is aimed to cut off sewage flow into storm water drains (which are meant to only carry excess rain water and not sewage). This plan will take up to three years and will cost the government Rs 4,000 crore.

"The anticipated broad cost for execution of works prioritized have been estimated as Rs 4,000 crore considering an escalation factor of 8.5 per cent for three years," said a report submitted by a committee setup on orders of the NGT to prepare plan of action to prevent sewage to enter into river Yamuna. This cost excludes the cost of sewage works already under implementation by DJB.

It said that majority of storm drains in the sewered areas of Delhi are carrying sewage which is "unacceptable" and priority will be given to maintain and preserve them.

"An elaborate exercise has been done to formulate a plan with an objective that no sewage from any of the unauthorized colonies should enter the natural storm drains even without having the primary sewage network implemented," stated the report.

The committee also noted that taking sewage away to a downstream location outside wouldn't work and decentralized sewage treatment plants would be useful in rejuvenating river Yamuna.

The key activities, DDA noted, "includes superimposition of all the 201 natural drains in Delhi, revival of natural drains, identification of proposed sewage infrastructure", among other measures.

HEALTH SERVICES

DECCAN HERALD, OCT 16, 2014

End stigma around mental illness

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has acted at last to announce a mental health policy for the country. This is an important milestone in India's approach to mental health. Hitherto, it was not accorded the importance it deserved; mental health was simply a part of the larger public health policy. The mental health policy aims at ensuring universal access to mental healthcare in the country by expanding the hospital network and primary care centres, improving understanding of mental health and strengthening leadership at all levels of the mental health sector. The policy is backed by the Mental Health Action Plan 365, which spells out the role of governments at the central, state and local levels and of civil society, too. It marks a different approach as it reflects a new sensitivity to issues such as social stigma that surrounds mental disorders and the correlation between poverty and mental illness.

It breaks new ground by emphasising the rights of the mentally ill and stresses the need to decriminalise suicide. Undoubtedly, the mental health policy has enormous potential. However, how effectively will it be implemented? Commitment to the cause of mental health seems tenuous. Last year, the BJP-led NDA, then in opposition, prevented the passage in parliament of several pieces of legislation, including the Mental Health Care Bill. Petty politics were prioritised over issues of importance to people of this country. This raises doubts over how assiduously the NDA government will work to implement the mental health policy.

Expertise and infrastructure to treat mental health problems are at best rudimentary in India. According to WHO, India has only 3,500 psychiatrists; one for every 343,000 people. Just 0.06 per cent of India's health budget is set aside for mental health. This is grossly inadequate considering that one in five Indians will experience some form of mental illness at some point in their life. The mental health policy promises to improve facilities and expertise. It must focus attention on rural India, where no facilities for treatment exist and poverty inhibits access to treatment. Efforts to provide universal access to quality treatment will be futile so long as our attitudes to mental illness do not change. Social stigma and exclusion of the mentally ill are severe in India. Such exclusion not only stands in the way of a mentally ill person accessing treatment but also it aggravates the illness. Just as important as building infrastructure is the task of dispelling the many misconceptions about mental illnesses that stand in the way of treatment and recovery.

HOUSING

TRIBUNE, OCT 17, 2014

Housing scheme: DDA receives 7.5 lakh forms

The DDA Housing Scheme -2014 launched on September 1 ended yesterday. During one and half months time the DDA received at total number of 7.5 lakh applications, said an official.

The new scheme offered over 25,000 flats across various categories.

The fate of these applicants would be decided next month, as the housing authority has kept November 5 as the tentative date for the draw of the lots, the official said.

The DDA website had crashed within a few hours of its launch on September 1, prompting authorities to upgrade its server to meet the "exponentially increased user traffic".

The official said a dedicated server would be temporarily set up to cope with the anticipated rush of online traffic during the draw time. The server will have load-balancing facilities, to avert chances of crashing the website due to heavy traffic.

The website had crashed during the launch and the draw time of the previous scheme (DDA 2010 Housing Scheme). Keeping this in view the DDA is taking all precautionary measures this time, he said.

The procedure for the draw has also been uploaded on the website and applicants can now also check the status of their application online.

LABOUR

ECONOMIC TIMES, OCT 16, 2014

PM Narendra Modi unveils labour reforms; launches Universal Account Number for employees

The scheme introduces portability for EPF accounts by linking them with bank accounts. There is also a provision for portability of the EPF account through a UAN.

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) today unveiled a string of [labour reforms](#), including measures to end 'inspector raj', asserting that ease of doing business is "essential" to ensure 'Make-in-India' campaign is successful.

He dedicated a number of schemes under [Shramev Jayate](#) (work alone triumphs) programme which includes portability through [universal account number](#) for employee provident fund, single window portal to enable doing business with labour ministry and labour inspection scheme in central sphere.

Modi said these steps exemplified his government's approach of 'minimum government and maximum governance'.

Elaborating on steps to end the inspector raj -- harassment by officials, Modi said a transparent labour inspection scheme is being developed to check arbitrariness.

While so far the units for inspection were selected locally without any objective criteria, the new scheme envisages that serious matters will be covered under the mandatory inspection list.

A computerised list of inspections will be generated randomly on predetermined objective criteria and complaints-based inspection will also be determined centrally based on data and evidence. There will also be provision of Emergency List for inspection of serious cases.

"We have replaced 16 forms (which factory owners had to fill) with one form, which is available online. Now computer draw will decide which inspector (labour) will go for inspection to which factory and he will have to upload his report online in 72 hours.

"These facilities are what I call minimum government, maximum governance. I have been hearing about 'inspector raj' since childhood," Modi said.

Noting that it is the responsibility of the government to simplify processes for doing trade, the Prime Minister said, "Ease of business is the first and foremost requirement if 'Make In India' has to be made successful. Ease of business is the priority for Make In India."

Inaugurating the 'Pandit Deendayal Upadhyay Shramev Jayate Karyakram' organised by the Labour Ministry, Modi also reached out to 4.2 lakh ITI students through SMS as he greeted the achievers with ITI degrees in various fields, hailing the undergraduate technical course.

Besides the ITI students, about one crore EPFO subscribers also got SMSes regarding portability through UAN and about 6.50 lakh establishments and 1,800 inspectors got SMSes about Unified Labour Portal which, the government believes will make for a transparent and accountable Labour Inspection Scheme.

The Prime Minister said that this event is different from other launches as the message has reached to the stakeholders at the same time.

Laying emphasis on skill development in Apprenticeship Protsahan Yojana that he launched, the Prime Minister said that the country has huge potential to provide manpower to the world, which will require this by 2020.

Presently there are 2.82 lakh apprentices undergoing training against 4.9 lakh seats.

An initiative to revamp the apprenticeship scheme has been undertaken and the particular scheme will support one lakh apprentices during the period up to March 2017.

Reaching out to the working class, he said that he is keen that Rs 27 thousand crore lying unclaimed in PF accounts are given back to their claimants arguing that if mobile subscribers get connectivity everywhere they go, why cannot migrating labour force can continue to get PF benefits.

"I have to give back this money to the poor. This Rs 27 thousand crore belongs to the poor," he said even as he took a dig at this critics for questioning his vision.

"Those who ask what is Modi's vision won't be able to see this because the power of their spectacles has gone up just looking for a vision," he said.

Stressing that the government functions on trust and not doubt, he said that this was the vision behind his government's decision allowing self certification of documents by enterprising youths, who had to run from pillar to post earlier to get their documents attested by officials.

Exhorting people to accord respect to labour and consider labourers as 'Shramyogi', he said that society can develop only if the dignity and honour of labour is restored in social life vis a vis other white collared jobs.

Noting that it is ironical that while an unemployed graduate in some other course is respected, those from ITIs are looked down upon and they are hesitant to identify themselves due to it.

"We have not considered labour respectable. We treated it as downgrade," he said, adding that a compassionate approach will ensure that "Shram Yogi" becomes "Rashtra Yogi" and "Rashtra Nirmaata".

Modi made a strong pitch for understanding and appreciating labour issues through the perspective of the labourers, so that they could be resolved with compassion.

The Prime Minister lauded the efforts of the Ministry of Labour and Employment in launching a series of schemes simultaneously, which took into account the interests of workers as well as the employers. He said the [Shram Suvidha](#) Portal has simplified compliance of 16 labour laws, through a single online form.

Modi said that transparent Labour Inspection Scheme for random selection of units for inspection would end undue harassment of the "Inspector Raj," while ensuring better compliance.

The Prime Minister said the initiative of appointing National Brand Ambassadors of vocational training would instill pride and confidence in ITI students.

Lauding e-governance as easy, effective and economical governance, he said that it will also boost transparency.

LIBRARIES

INDIAN EXPRESS, OCT 17, 2014

University to get 'green' library soon

A sample model of Green Library

The Mumbai University (MU) is all set to build a new library at its Vidyanagri campus in Kalina based on the concept of a 'green' building. According to the varsity officials, they are looking at setting up a modern library, which will be called – 'Modern Knowledge Resource Centre' to be able to fulfill the diverse needs of students. The library building which will come up on approximately 4500 square metre area will be varsity's first green building. The building will be a ground plus two storey structure and will have a capacity to accommodate 300 people at one time indoors. According to the varsity's proposed design of the building there will seating arrangements available outside the building to provide "open space learning environment" to students.

The existing library at the campus — Jawaharlal Nehru (J N) Library is in a dilapidated condition with cracks all around its walls and ceilings. On September 1 this year, a slab from a ceiling of the library's C-wing collapsed. According to sources, this was the third such case in the past three years. Varsity has been sanctioning funds for the past few years for the repair of the library, however, nothing improved the state of the structure. Hence, the Varsity finally announced its plans to build a new library and 'Modern Knowledge Resource Centre'.

According to the varsity officials all the books, periodicals and journals from the Old JN library will be shifted to the centre. "The resource centre's Collection is focused on the Digital images and Print Resource (National and International Journals, eBooks) and create the learning environment in open space provided with the Wi-Fi and special kind of conference facilities and also connected to other libraries. MU is looking at phasing out the age old kind of library services to make way for modern knowledge and resource centres," said Leeladhar Bansod, deputy registrar PR of Mumbai University.

TRIBUNE, OCT 17, 2014

Over 170 attend seminar at PU library

A seminar on "Enhancing Access to Library Resources – a Critical Discussion, Examination and Evaluation of Web-Scale Discovery Services" was organised by AC Joshi Library, PU, today. It was organised in collaboration with the SLA-Asian Chapter and Proquest India, an electronic database service provider. It was attended by PU librarian Dr Raj Kumar and more than 170 library professionals from the region.

Miles Stauffer, technical head from Proquest, Japan, gave a presentation on summons discovery tool. There was a presentation on e-journals and e-books by the team of Proquest. Dr Meenu Singh, Prof of Paediatrics, PGI, Chandigarh, delivered a talk on evidence-based medicine - role of librarians.

HINDU, OCT 17, 2014

GHMC to fully spruce up library

City Grandhalya Samstha at Chikkadpally to get amenities

The Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) would ensure all required basic amenities for around 3,000 students who regularly visit the City Grandhalya Samstha at Chikkadpally to prepare for competitive examinations, GHMC Commissioner, Somesh Kumar said on Thursday.

He also announced introduction of the Rs. 5 food scheme at the library premises to provide quality meals for about 500 students and for more if required, according to a press release. The Commissioner visited the library following a request made by Musheerabad MLA K. Laxman and assured the students of facilities such as drinking water, furniture, toilets, renovations where needed and electricity within a month. Dr. Laxman said a committee with some of the students would be formed, which along with him would take care of the grievances and have it placed before the Commissioner.

Except for eight properties, almost 90 per cent of the inner ring road around Charminar taken up as part of the Charminar Pedestrianisation Project has been completed. The GHMC said in a press release on Thursday that the Paris Corner building at Panchmohalla spread over 317 square yards has been acquired under private negotiation and the land and structural compensation amount paid to the owners in recent times.

Meeting

A meeting of senior officials and heads of departments held on Thursday to discuss steps for making Hyderabad a world class city, covered 14 different infrastructure facilities such as drinking water arrangements, roads, electricity, communication, transport, energy, environment and safety and security among others.

According to a press release issued here, the interaction which had participation of B.V. Papa Rao, Advisor to Government, Narsing Rao, Principal Secretary, CMO, S.K. Joshi, MA&UD Principal Secretary, Pradeep Chandra, HMDA Commissioner, Somesh Kumar, GHMC Commissioner and M. Jagdishwar, HMWSSB Managing Director decided to come up with proposals in a day or two and have a meeting with the Chief Minister, K. Chandrasekhar Rao. The officials discussed about providing a separate lake for Ganesh idol immersion near Indira Park and noted that nearly 110 major industries located at Kukatpally were releasing industrial effluents and drainage water in the Hussainsagar lake polluting the entire water body.

HINDU, OCT 17, 2014

Call to protect museum, library

Intellectuals rue lapse of funds sanctioned for their development

Highlighting the need for bringing pressure on the government for the redemption of Rs. 2 crore that was released for the development of Andhra Sahitya Parishad Museum and Library, correspondent of the Ideal Group of Educational Institutions P. Chiranjeevini

Kumari on Tuesday called upon writers and intellectuals to launch a movement to preserve the valuable palm scripts and manuscripts in the possession of the museum.

Ms. Chiranjeevini Kumari was the chief guest at the inaugural function of 'Parishad Prabha Vyjayanthi,' a literary programme launched jointly by the Sastriya Vignana Samithi and the Andhra Sahitya Parishad to recollect the literary works published by the century-old Sahitya Parishad. Speaking on the occasion, she said that it was unfortunate on the part of the district administration to lose the Rs. 2 crore grant released by the government three years ago.

"The irony is that none of the intellectuals and writers here are unaware of the lapse of funds till recently. We should join hands to fight for the funds and construct a new building for the conservation of rare palm scripts and manuscripts. After all, it is our heritage and we have to protect it," she said, while commending the efforts of the president of the Sastriya Vignana Samiti Dantu Surya Rao in celebrating the centenary of the Parishad on a grand-scale.

Mr. Surya Rao, who presided over the function, said that efforts were on to get back funds from the government and the issue was with the higher-ups.

He said that Deputy Speaker of the Legislative Assembly Mandali Buddha Prasad and local MP Tota Narasimham were keen on reconstructing the museum building and preserving the collection of the Sahitya Parishad.

Assistant Director of the Department of Archaeology and Museums S. Venkata Rao said that the lapse of the funds was due to a report submitted by the engineering wing about the strength of the building that was housing the museum now. "As per the revised estimates, it may cost about Rs. 5 crore to construct a new building," he said.

NEW YEAR

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 17, 2014

This new year, get personalised e-cards from PM Modi

Chetan Chauhan

Marking the New Year on a different note, millions of Indians would get a personalised greeting card from the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the New Year's Eve with a message that in 2015 the government will aim to connect entire country on a digital platform either through broadband or mobile phones.

Modi in his Independence Day speech had emphasised on "Digital India" as key to transform the country and bring in transparency in governance. Through Digital India, the government aims to bring all public services on a common digital platform and create knowledge empowered society.

The Digital India Mission will get a fillip from the Prime Minister on the New Year's eve to elaborate on "connecting nation any-time anywhere" with special emphasis on linking every village in India with a broadband connection. In addition, the government will also focus on ensuring internet through mobile phones.

"The telecom commission has already approved money for mobile connectivity in remote areas and the work has already started," an official said. "We are looking at end of 2015 to provide mobile connectivity in every village".

The government sources said the Prime Minister was keen to make Digital India a platform for providing corruption free governance with total transparency to the lowest level. The department of Information Technology has been directed by the Prime Minister's Office to fasten the implementation process and said the funds would not be a bottleneck for the flagship programme of the government.

Finance minister Arun Jaitley had allocated Rs. 200 crore for the programme in his budget for a kick-start and more money will come in the next budget. As these steps are being taken, the PM would be delivering a message to people across India embarking on nation connected anytime-anywhere. The IT ministry through the web-portal mygov.in has sought design from people of the e-greeting card that the PM would be emailing.

Before the New Year, Prime Minister Modi is also expected to interact with people through All India Radio (AIR) before the eve with his broad message for 2015. The officials, however, said the details of the same were to be worked out.

POSTAL SERVICES

BUSINESS STANDARD, OCT 16, 2014

Post offices in Mysore initiate new services

Postal Life Insurance is being made online and core banking facility is being extended to all post offices in the city

[Post offices](#) in [Mysore](#) will expand into newer areas of service including providing [ATM](#) facilities and free pick-up service for postal articles.

Four post offices in Mysore are being provided with ATM facilities that will allow customers to withdraw money without having to wait at the counter in the post office. [Postal Life Insurance](#) is being made online and core banking facility is being extended to all post offices in the city.

Revealing this on the occasion of the National Postal Week, which concluded today, Senior Superintendent of Post Offices D Shivaiah highlighted the new initiatives being taken up by the Department of Posts in improving the mail business.

Highlighting other online services and advanced technology being adopted, he said five exclusive pick-up vehicles have been provided in Mysore for facilitating free pick-up service for speed post, business parcel and logistics post. An exclusive counter for logistics post and business parcel at the RMS Building in Mandi Mohalla, near the railway station, had been set up. Customers could pay their electricity bills at post offices in rural areas too.

The Postal Week celebration was aimed at generating a broader awareness about the department, its role and activities among the public at the national level and highlight its contribution to the social and economic development of the country, Shivaiah added.

SOCIAL SECURITY

ASIAN AGE, OCT 17, 2014

India has the weakest retirement system

Less than 6% covered under private pension plans: Report

India's retirement system continues to rank the lowest amongst the 25 countries, with less than 6 per cent of the working population in the country covered under private pension plans while Denmark tops the list with its well-funded plan, according to a recent report.

The country's score largely remained unchanged at a grade of 'D', which is between 35 and 50, indicating that it has some sound features but there are major omissions or weaknesses, according to 2014 Melbourne Mercer Global Pension Index (MMGPI).

The report also pointed out that the D-grade classification may also occur in the relatively early stages of the development of a particular country's retirement income system, like India, China, Indonesia and Korea.

The public sector in India has adequate retirement benefits through other additional retirement benefits provided, but they represent only a small fraction of the entire population of India, it explained.

Economic and regulatory changes have put a lot of pressure on the pension mechanism with less than 6 per cent of the working population in India covered under private pension plans (including pension plans for public sector employees and the military), while more than 75 per cent of the working age population in Chile, Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden are covered under the private pension plans, it said.

The report said there is no pension or support for the poor and aged and what continues to hold India back is the lack of retirement coverage for the informal sector and less than adequate retirement income expected to be generated from contributions made to Employee's Provident Fund (EPF) and Gratuity benefits.

The Mercer Global Pension Index uses three sub-indices adequacy, sustainability and integrity to measure each country's retirement income system against more than 50 questions.

"India scored well in the integrity of their retirement system. However, improving the minimum level of support for the poor, improving the regulations of private pension plans and addressing issues on increasing life expectancy will help raise the score in the future," Mercer's India retirement business leader Arvind Usretay said.

TERRORISM

ASIAN AGE, OCT 16, 2014

'Individual terrorist' to come under law?

The Union home ministry is mulling widening the ambit of the law to give the National Investigation Agency the mandate to probe offences committed against an Indian citizen or an Indian property outside India.

For the purpose, the agency wants the government to amend Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and the NIA Act .

This will be the first such move by the Narendra Modi government to specifically include citizens of India living outside the country and persons in service of the government working outside the country under the purview of the counter-terror law.

The agency has argued that terror crime has an international dimension and non-residents Indians and country's embassies may become targets of terrorists. Therefore, the Act should be applied to citizens of India outside India, persons in government service wherever they are and persons on ships and aircraft registered in India wherever they may be. The law is also being tweaked to include "individual terrorist".

Top sources said cases have come to light in the recent past of individuals coming forward to plan a terror act single-handedly.

The National Investigation Agency wants to include "an individual terrorist" and also bring properties used by an individual terrorist in its ambit.

Sources said the move to empower the NIA to take extra territorial probes is possible since the Saarc (Suppression of Terrorism Act) 1993 provides for extra-territorial jurisdiction for investigation of terrorism offences.

The international convention for the suppression of terrorist bombing also provides for extra territorial jurisdiction. The law in the US already has a provision for such probes which allowed it to take up probes of IC-814 hijack and the 26/11 Mumbai attacks where US citizens were targeted in these terror acts.

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HINDU, OCT 16, 2014

Sweeping & Swabbing

G RAMACHANDRA REDDY

It is heartening to note that Narendra Modi's government has launched ~ on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi ~ a massive "Clean India" programme that encompasses personal cleanliness, cleanliness of public places, and the environment. It has been reported that the government intends to involve ministers, the bureaucracy, NGOs, and social activists in this gigantic task. Closely related to this scheme is the one on toilets across rural India, originally initiated by Jairam Ramesh and now followed up by Mr Modi at a cost of Rs 60,000 crore. Cleanliness had been robustly advocated by both Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. In his book, *Discovery of India*, Nehru had deprecated what he called "ceremonial purity" in which one cleans his body, cleans utensils and his house... and dumps the rubbish on the street. While Mr Modi's project has gone down well with a section of our intelligentsia and the political class, more fundamental issues facing the nation cry out for a solution. Poverty is one such issue and it has rightly been remarked that poverty pollutes. An estimated 200 million people in India are poor, indeed victims of our democratic political system and capitalist economy. Poverty can lead to malnutrition and other health problems. As Swami Vivekananda had once remarked, "So long as millions live in poverty and ignorance, I hold everyone as a traitor." Therefore, it is poverty that needs to be "cleaned up" with uppermost priority. How can this be achieved in today's India?

During the British Raj, ministers in accord with the Government of India Act of 1935 had set before themselves, under the moral guidance of Gandhi, new standards of honesty and public service. But after Independence, there occurred a marked erosion of such ideals. Therefore, the task before Mr Modi is to clean up the body politic through political and electoral reforms without waiting for the Supreme Court's guidelines. This needs to be followed up by administrative, police and judicial reforms... with accountability for failures, inaction, inefficiency and corruption. The imperial mindset of the bureaucracy and the police, its attitude towards punctuality, accessibility, and action on public grievances call for a dramatic change or cleanup.

The loot of the nation's natural resources by a combination of capitalists, crony capitalists and the establishment ~ in the form of spectrum, coal, gas, iron ore etc. ~ was going on unchecked till the Supreme Court applied the brakes. Mr Modi's government needs to break this politician-criminal nexus and undertake a campaign/cleanup operation to save the natural resources. Crores of public money go down the drain in the form of "revenues forgone" while preparing the budget. The words in quotes are a euphemism for tax concessions and exemptions to business and industry. The bad debt of banks is also written off. It is imperative that the "save public treasury" clean-up operation is

undertaken with urgent despatch. On 3 October this year, media reports quoted the former CVC, Mr Pradeep Kumar, as alleging that there is an “organised fraud” in bank bad debts (NPAs) and that an attempt is being made to suppress the magnitude of the swindle.

Mr Modi’s personal integrity is not in dispute. He has started off well with a reform agenda and is reported to have junked several antiquated laws. Still more important is to junk wasteful/superfluous government departments. In the pre-independence days, one could almost count on one’s finger-tips the number of ministries. At least 30 per cent of the government departments can be downsized to save public money. There is considerable romanticism with numbers ~ more government jobs, more policemen, more courts, more funds. But the reality is that we need a higher degree of efficiency and honesty from these public institutions particularly their leaders in order to deliver public services speedily and honestly.

Therefore, a massive clean-up campaign against sloth, insensitivity, inefficiency and corruption in public institutions, in particular the bureaucracy and the police, is imperative to place the country on the growth trajectory and to build a new republic with the people in focus.

The “establishment” needs cleansing before it sets out to clean society. An estimated 3 to 4 million crimes occur annually. There are one lakh road fatalities. An efficient police system can reduce the crime and the death rate in accidents by at least 30 per cent.

River beds, lakes, and tanks are taken over by land sharks, snuffing out green spaces in cities and towns. Thousands of lakes have disappeared in Ranga Reddy district of Andhra Pradesh. Under the pressure of civil society activists and the courts, cases of criminal liability are on occasion initiated, but only against a microscopic minority. Government land ~ allotted to prestigious cooperative housing societies meant for MPs, MLAs, film actors, and the social elite ~ is grossly misused. Parks and other green spaces earmarked in those societies disappear due to the greed and corruption of managing committees, and the crime is simply ignored by the government authorities. Some members of the previous managing committee of Jubilee Hills Co-op. Housing Society in Hyderabad are facing criminal investigations, under the orders of Andhra Pradesh High Court, for selling out green spaces fraudulently. Hence, a cleanup operation to check the rape of nature needs attention.

Adulteration is the name of the game in our Republic ~ adulterated mid-day meals for children, adulteration of edible oils, milk, petrol, diesel etc. Water for drinking and cooking is also not free from pollutants. Industries polluting rivers is a grave health hazard. A cleanup operation is urgently required as is a campaign to save the wastage of piped water and electricity.

Former Prime Minister V.P. Singh had once referred to tax evasion as an industry by itself. We therefore need to effect a cleanup of the tax laws and their enforcement machinery to realise higher revenue.

The writer is a former Inspector-General of Police and author

TIMES OF INDIA, OCT 18, 2014

Urban planner PSN Rao made DUAC chief

NEW DELHI: Urban planner and head of the housing department at School of Planning and Architecture PSN Rao has been appointed the new chairman of the Delhi Urban Art Commission (DUAC).

The Urban development ministry has also appointed four members to the commission: Sonali Bhagwati, Sonali Rastogi, Samir Mathur and Durga Shankar Mishra.

The new panel, constituted under the provisions of the DUAC Act, will have a tenure of three years. While Rao has studied urban management in Canada, Bhagwati and Rastogi are architects. Mathur is a landscape architect who designed the AIIMS inter-change and Mishra is the additional secretary in Urban development ministry.

DUAC, set up in May, 1974, is mandated with preserving, developing and maintaining the aesthetic quality of urban and environmental design in Delhi. It advises several bodies including DDA, New Delhi Municipal Council and the corporations. It also initiates studies pertaining to the development and beautification of Delhi.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, OCT 18, 2014

Bangalore rechristened: Home ministry gives 'Bengaluru' green signal **Sudipto Monda**

On November 1 this year Karnataka chief minister Siddaramaiah is expected to officially announce changes to the names of 12 cities in the state. The new Kannada names are likely to bring a cheer to native speakers of the language especially since they will become official on the day Karnataka was born.

The colonial era name Bangalore, for instance, will become Bengaluru - a name that is believed to derive from the even older Benda-Kaal-Uru (the city of boiled beans)

The Union home ministry on Friday issued a notification approving the state government's eight-year-old proposal to change the names. The first official proposal was sent during the chief ministership of N Dharam in 2006 when both the state and central

governments were led by the Congress. The proposal has been finally brought out of the freezer by the Modi government.

However, it will still be a matter of pride for Siddaramaiah to announce the new names on November 1 - Karnataka Rajyotsava or Karnataka Formation Day.

Karnataka might have been born out of the demand for a separate state for Kannada speakers. But Kannada is not the only ancient language spoken within the boundaries of the state.

In Tulu - a Dravidian language spoken in coastal Karnataka dating back to the 14th century - the city of Mangalore is called Kudla. The Konkani speakers of the region call Mangalore Kodial and the Beary speakers call it Maikala. The change from the English Mangalore to the Kannada Mangaluru is unlikely to trigger euphoria in the region where the movement for a separate linguistic state has existed ever since Karnataka was formed.

In Belgaum, which will now be called Belagavi, the change is expected to be received with hostility from the Marathi speakers, many of whom want to merge the parts of the region with Maharashtra. Belagavi is, after all, a Kannada name not a Marathi one. The approval granted to new name by the centre will surely agitate the Belgaum based Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) as well as the Shiv Sena.

Interestingly, the new name for Belgaum comes at a time when the state government is considering banning the MES, which has gained a reputation for militant agitations. The MES and the Shiv Sena are not likely to forgive the BJP led central government for choosing Kannada pride over Maratha pride and joining concert with the Congress government in Karnataka.

Although Siddaramaiah had little to do with the changes, it will come as an image boost for him when his government is just coming into stride. After being accused of lethargy, the Siddaramaiah government has been showing some signs of life by winning the recent bye-elections.