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## CIVIL SERVICE

HINDU, SEP 24, 2015

### **Income tax staff to strike work on October 8**

TCA SHARAD RAGHAVAN

The Income Tax Employees Federation and the Income Tax Gazetted Officers' Association — together accounting for 97 per cent of the total workforce in the Income Tax Department — on Wednesday announced that they have decided to go on strike on October 8, protesting the high number of vacancies in the Income Tax department in the middle management, and the failure of the upper management to promote anybody to these levels.

“The reason behind the failure in achieving the promised revenue collection and enhancing the number of existing taxpayers and also providing better taxpayers' service is that most of the posts up to the level of deputy/assistant commissioner of Income Tax are lying vacant even after more that two years of cadre-restructuring approval,” the two unions said in a joint statement.

“The department shows intention of filling up all the posts in senior-management... but in the cadres of deputy/assistant commissioner of Income Tax, who are responsible for handling all the big assesses of the country and collect more than 80 per cent of the revenue, there is a 30 per cent vacancy. Also, there are more than 30 per cent vacancies in all grade B and C cadres who directly take part in the collection of revenue and providing taxpayer services,” the statement added.

### **Major overhaul**

The government in 2013 agreed to a major overhaul of the structure of the Income Tax Department, wherein it approved the cadre restructuring proposal of Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) on May 23, 2013. Due to this restructuring, the department at the time assured additional revenue in direct taxes of more than Rs. 25,000 crore per annum over and above the normal budgetary collection, the statement said.

DECCAN HERALD, SEP 24, 2015

### **Pay Commission to submit report soon**

Seventh Pay Commission is ready with its recommendations on revising emoluments for nearly 48 lakh central government employees and 55 lakh pensioners, and will soon submit report to the Finance Ministry.

Earlier in August, the government had extended Commission's term by another four months till December 31 to give recommendations.

"The Commission is ready with recommendations and the report will be submitted soon," according to sources.

The Commission, whose recommendations may also have a bearing on the salaries of the state government staff, was given more time by the Union Cabinet just a day before its original 18-month term was coming to an end.

Headed by Justice A K Mathur, the Commission was appointed in February 2014 and its recommendations are scheduled to take effect from January 1, 2016.

The government constitutes the Pay Commission almost every 10 years to revise the pay scale of its employees and often states also implement the panel's recommendations after some modifications.

As part of the exercise, the Commission holds discussions with various stakeholders, including organisations, federations, groups representing civil employees as well as defence services.

Meena Agarwal is the secretary of the Commission. Other members are Vivek Rae, a retired IAS officer of 1978 batch and Rathin Roy, an economist.

The Sixth Pay Commission was implemented with effect from January 1, 2006, the fifth from January 1, 1996 and the fourth from January 1, 1986.

**HINDUSTAN TIMES, SEP 28, 2015**

**Govt to weed out inefficient civil servants, from bottom up**

**Aloke Tikku**

The personal staff of senior civil servants will be the first to be put under the government's scanner as part of its plan to identify and sack inefficient, corrupt babus to cleanse the bureaucracy.

Under a six decade-old rule that has only been occasionally invoked, the Centre had earlier this month ordered all departments to review the performance of employees who have put in 30-years of service.

Central secretariat stenographers service (CSSS) officials — who serve in the personal staff of senior civil servants and ministers — would be the first set of officers to be reviewed.

This process is expected to begin next month.

But this implies that the subordinate services are going to be first on the firing line under Fundamental Rule 56 (J) that empowers the Centre to boot out employees after issuing a notice.

Shekhar Singh, an academic who also lectures civil servants, says this was not the right way to start.

The proportion of employees who may need to be removed may be larger at the lower level for a variety of reasons including the fact that there were no incentives for them to perform.

“But the right way to start is from the top because it is only then that you have the moral authority,” said Singh, adding that it was equally important that the process to review the performance should be completely independent.

KKN Kutty, president of the Confederation of Central Government Employees, agreed. Kutty said they were supportive of the government’s initiative to removal employees who had earned a dubious reputation over decades in service as far as corruption was concerned.

But he was cagey about public servants being removal on grounds of inefficiency, which left too much to the discretion.

In both cases, it would be advisable to go by the employees’ complete service record rather than just the last few years, he said, hoping that the government has learnt from its experiences in the past.

Kutty, president of the Confederation of Central Government Employees, recalled that a similar exercise undertaken in the eighties by then finance minister VP Singh got caught in legal wrangles because the power was not exercised impartially.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, SEP 27, 2015

**Centre forms committee to review UPSC exam pattern**

The central government has formed an expert committee to examine various issues related to age relaxation, eligibility, syllabus and pattern of civil services examination to select IAS and IPS officers.

“The committee has been formed to look into all aspects of civil services examination,” Union minister Jitendra Singh said on Sunday.

Based on the report of the committee, further changes in the civil services exam pattern will be contemplated with the primary objective of providing a level-playing field to aspirants from diverse streams of curriculum like mathematics, engineering, medicine or humanities, he said.

Till such time as the recommendations of the committee are received and the government subsequently takes a decision on the same, Singh said that the General Studies Paper-II (also known as CSAT) in the civil services preliminary examination will remain a qualifying paper with minimum qualifying marks fixed at 33%.

Meanwhile, the government’s decision taken last year to exclude the English portion consisting of 22 marks in the General Studies Paper-II of the civil services preliminary examination from tabulation also continues to remain in force, he told PTI in Delhi.

The panel has been formed as follow-up to the decision taken by the government in May this year to form such a committee, said Singh, minister of state for personnel, public grievances and pensions, said.

The panel will be headed by former Chhattisgarh-cadre IAS officer BS Baswan and consist of leading academicians, technocrats and senior bureaucrats, officials said.

Singh recalled that soon after the Narendra Modi government took over on May 26, 2014, it was confronted with the demands from across the country for revisiting the pattern and syllabus of civil services examination.

It was also being alleged that the present syllabus and pattern tended to benefit students from mathematics and engineering backgrounds, he said.

Singh said the decision to revise the civil services exam pattern was a path-breaking one and aimed to achieve the basic objective of ensuring that the best and the most deserving with a genuine aptitude, should get the opportunity to become a part of the administrative set up of rapidly developing 21st century India.

The civil services examination is conducted annually in three stages-- preliminary, main and interview -- to select candidates for prestigious Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and Indian Police Service (IPS) among others.

There are two compulsory papers -- Paper I and Paper II -- of 200 marks each in civil services preliminary examination.

ECONOMIC TIMES, SEP 24, 2015

**IAS officers given time till November 30 to find way to simplify at least two government processes**

By [Aman Sharma](#)

IAS officers of 2013 batch have time till November 30 to come up with ideas on simplifying at least two processes of the government.

NEW DELHI: Indian Administrative Service officers of 2013 batch have time till November 30 to come up with ideas on simplifying at least two processes of the government before they face Prime Minister [Narendra Modi](#) at a feedback session at the end of a rigorous three-month stint at the Centre.

The newly minted 170 officers, who are on deputation to the Centre before they head for their first state postings as part of an idea mooted by the PM, are being kept on their toes during the training, often literally.

A typical day, which begins with yoga for two hours from 6:30 am, is chock-a-block with meetings with senior officers and involves grappling with files related to the Centre's flagship programmes. The Department of Personnel and Training has issued as many as 99 orders over the past one month on how they should go about their work, including a detailed 13-week work calendar to follow. But they can fall back on three senior secretaries who have been appointed as chief mentors.

The time spent with the central government will help the officers "acquire a national perspective and a deeper appreciation of harmonisation of diversities in national policies", according to a concept paper on the exercise being undertaken for the first time.

The chief mentors include home secretary Rajiv Mehrishi, defence secretary [Mohan Kumar](#) and [NITI Aayog](#) chief executive Sindhushree Khullar. The 52 ministries and departments where the young IAS officers have been posted as assistant secretaries have been divided into four clusters — social, economic, infrastructure and regulatory. These clusters have been assigned to Jugal Mohapatra (secretary, rural development), AC Duggal (secretary, finance services), [Amitabh Kant](#) (secretary, Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion) and [Sanjay Kothari](#) (secretary, DoPT) respectively, who have been tasked with meeting every 15 days to take stock of the performance of the assistant secretaries.

Cabinet secretary PK Sinha on August 26 held a special meeting and assigned the job to these senior secretaries. Sinha also directed the ministries to allot desks pertaining to the Modi government's flagship programmes to the new officers or programmes which have a bearing on states in terms of implementation. This will give the officers an opportunity to look at the projects from the point of view of both the Centre and the ground level, Sinha said at the meeting.

Before the session with the PM, each of the officers will be required to prepare a 'Paper on Innovation' or 'Process re-engineering to improve functioning of Government of India', along with identifying at least two processes for simplification and compiling the guidelines or norms pertaining to their desk.

The DoPT is keeping a close watch on the number of files initiated and disposed of at the desk of each assistant secretary, who has to attend meetings within and outside the ministry with other officers as well. The trainees have been asked to meet every officer in their ministry as well as the ministers.

As per the 13-week work calendar, the assistant secretaries have to meet officers and secretaries across the board in the first two weeks, identify a specific project in the third week on which they will do extensive and intensive work, and work on action on frontlines for Swachh Bharat Abhiyan on October 2. Between the fourth and the eighth weeks, they will have to come to grips with the intricacies of implementation of schemes and projects, and "wear the thinking caps — question and challenge existing processes and policies" in the ninth and tenth weeks.

The 11th and 12th weeks will be time to "bring it all together" with a presentation to the secretary on two processes that can be simplified or modified and bring files handed by the officer to the logical end. The assistant secretaries have already had meetings with principal secretary to the PM, Cabinet secretary, foreign secretary, home secretary, Railway Board chairman, Comptroller and Auditor General, central information commissioner, central vigilance commissioner, chief election commissioner and NITI Aayog V-C.

They have attended two recent conferences held by the PM this month and submitted weekly notes on their activities since their stint began on September 1. Besides, the Institute of Secretariat Training and Management has sent 23 case studies on noting and drafting which have been distributed among the assistant secretaries. The government has organised yoga sessions at Commonwealth Games Village, Curzon Road Apartments and Kidwai Nagar where these officers have been housed.

ECONOMIC TIMES, SEP 24, 2015

**Modi's babu problem: Expectations high from PM but he must fix bureaucratic talent crunch to deliver**

By Rajiv Kumar

Expectations high from Prime Minister but he must fix bureaucratic talent crunch to deliver.

I was alerted to the Pew Research Centre's latest survey findings on India by a remark from MoS [finance](#) Jayant Sinha at a recent conference, that the survey report was a great birthday gift for [Prime Minister Narendra Modi](#). It is also well timed coming just in advance of his impending trip to the US.

The survey reveals that 87% of the 2,452 respondents have a positive rating for Modi, up from 78% in December 2013. More remarkably 89% regard him favourably in rural India, 25% higher than [Congress](#). In cities BJP scores a high 84%, 31% higher than its main rival.

With Modi at the helm Indians have shed their dissatisfaction with the government, with 56% now believing that the country is moving in the right direction compared to less than a third in December 2013.

Clearly, the benefit of doubt is still firmly with Modi and people expect him to deliver on his promises for *acche din*, better governance and higher global recognition for India. People's expectations from Modi remain sky high.

Pew ratings and sky high expectations are of course welcome. But these also raise the stakes for Modi to deliver on his promises before it is too late. In this context, Sinha's caution on limited bandwidth for implementing reform measures is well taken. It must also be a cause of concern.

If true, this capacity constraint could convert passionate supporters - 73% give Modi 'very favourable' ratings in the Pew Survey - to disillusioned and disgruntled voters. They would feel let down and be ready to teach a lesson when the next major elections - those in UP in 2017 - come along.

Given that Indians have just recovered their self-esteem and self-confidence, this eventuality must be prevented. Otherwise cynicism directed at the political class will rise even higher than in 2013. Modi and his cabinet colleagues rely principally if not

exclusively on the civil service, especially the IAS, to design, develop and deliver government policies and flagship projects. [Jeff Immelt](#), [CEO](#) of [GE](#), said in Delhi on Monday that reforming the bureaucracy and enhancing its bandwidth is the key challenge today for the [Modi government](#).

However, bureaucratic capacity must already be stretched - especially if, as reports go, there are not too many takers within IAS for deputation as [joint secretary](#) to the central government.

If former [home secretary Gopal Pillai](#) - writing recently for an online portal - is to be believed, this lack of enthusiasm in IAS could be due to a noticeable loss of morale. This is a real surprise because the prevailing impression is that bureaucracy has unprecedented power under and support from Modi.

It is important to nurture and enhance the bench strength on Raisina Hill especially when the in-house perception is of limited bandwidth. The key issue, therefore, is the quality of in-house capacity for governance.

Publicly available data from the [Union Public Services Commission](#) gives us some idea. Unfortunately, it reveals a rather worrying trend. The competition for getting into the 24 covenanted civil services is as severe as it has ever been. Barely 0.36% of those applying in 2012 were selected as compared to 0.5% in 1997 (phew). I suppose this justifies the superior know all attitude of our covenanted bureaucracy.

Of those who finally made it, only 15.1% were between 21-24 years of age in 2012 compared to 17.4% in 2002. During the late 60s and 70s several of my peers joined the [civil service](#) straight after their undergraduate degrees.

This would be unheard of today when as many as 35.8% of those selected in 2012 were older than 28 years. The rise in the share of 'senior entrants' is partially because of an increase in the number of professionals, doctors, engineers and management graduates, whose share has more than doubled between 2002 and 2012.

It still remains rather small at 15%, but the trend is clear. Moreover, the share of 'reserved category candidates' including other backward castes, who have a higher age eligibility, has also risen from 48% in 2002 to 54% in 2012. Quite creditably, SC and ST candidates' share has gone up from 19% to 24% between 1998 and 2012.

These senior entrants have limited career options and so could be easily under motivated. The conclusion is inescapable that top students, who would join at an early age, are not as keen as earlier to join the civil services.

The bandwidth for governance has certainly not been improving over time. Given this sobering reality, should Modi not try and attract talent laterally? Time is not on Modi's side. Inducting and activating new talent takes time and considerable effort especially when this is not exactly welcomed by the 'system'.

It will be a pity if the prime minister succumbs to his top bureaucrats' advice that they will manage. Have they not always done so! Only fresh talent and [feedback](#) from multiple sources can help Modi keep his promises.

## DEFENCE, NATIONAL

STATESMAN, SEP 28, 2015

### **OROP: Scary impact?**

The Prime Minister was honest when confessing that the OROP promise was made before its full financial implications had been calculated. The defence minister appears to have been “clever”. When shortcomings in his 5 September announcement were immediately pointed out he claimed all residual problems would be resolved when the detailed order was issued after 20 days - that time-frame has expired, now defence ministry sources say it could take another two to four weeks for the formulation to be declared. Two immediate conclusions are that “military efficiency” continues to elude the bureaucrats in Manohar Parrikar’s squad, and that the highly-publicised statement the minister had made with the three Service chiefs in tow had been essentially to comply with an extra-Constitutional diktat. When the RSS put members of the ministerial council through the wringer it ordered that the OROP announcement be made ahead of the Bihar polls, it was alive to the political implications. The ministry now asserts that since the initial announcement has already been made the Model Code of Conduct does not preclude releasing details - further confirmation that the tamasha of 5 September was a cheap political ploy. A diversionary tactic plotted by the dirty-tricks department. While not everybody applauds the tactics of the Jantar Mantar agitators, there must be some appreciation of their refusing to be misled by ministerial assertions and sustaining a protest that many expected to fizzle out some three weeks ago. The veterans have displayed a brand of “staying power” that is rooted in their rigorous professional training. In inevitable casualty of the little-explained delay is the credibility of the NDA government, the defence minister in particular. The suspicion would be that the BJP’s much-stated backing of the armed services was mere lip-service, political jingoism. For the serving personnel would see no difference between the government’s attitude towards their senior citizens and themselves. With the Pay Commission award likely to throw up several pinpricks - or worse - the dawdling on OROP is ominous. Manohar Parrikar appears unaware of the impact on morale right down the line. Henceforth his word will be taken with the proverbial pinch of salt: with a major difference, it is while placing a finger on a bowl of salt that the fauji swears allegiance to “king and country”. The continuing agitation could have another negative impact too: after seeing their “officer sahibs” raising slogans, making politically-loaded statements and even snubbing the President (the Supreme Commander) the “men” might see nothing wrong in resorting to similar kinds of protest. The military ethos is wilting, and commanding officers ought to be “alive” to the potential spread of the cancer of indiscipline. Everybody is playing with fire.

## EDUCATION

TIMES OF INDIA, SEP 29, 2015

### **Delhi government plans to club school panels with mohalla sabhas**

NEW DELHI: The school management committees are likely not going to be the independent elected bodies Right to Education Act intended them to be. At the launch of a report on SMCs by Central Square Foundation, the education minister's adviser on education, Atishi Marlena, said, "Government hopes to embed SMCs within the structure of mohalla sabhas to enhance participation."

Marlena said each constituency will be divided into several mohalla sabhas and SMCs will be accountable to the mohalla sabhas. They'll be sub committees within the sabha, which, in turn, will be the ultimate decision making body.

There was also much discussion on their funding. In theory, SMC functions are publicly funded, they are meant to draw up school development plans on the basis of which grants are released. But SMCs have not functioned quite in the way they were intended to.

As the report says, "community members lack awareness regarding the roles and responsibilities of SMCs. Also, SMC members receive inadequate training for school monitoring and planning. Finally, SMC monitoring by state governments inhibits effective implementation." National University of Educational Planning and Administration's A K Singh said, "SMCs may be local but funding comes centrally, reducing effectiveness."

The report also argues, "There is inconclusive evidence in India on the efficacy of community participation in improving student learning" although, questions have been raised about the viability of such large-scale standardized tests in gauging learning too.

PIONEER, SEP 29, 2015

### **GOVERNMENT WORKING FOR TEACHERS' BETTERMENT, CLAIMS EDUCATION MINISTER**

Minister of State of Education Deepak Joshi has said that the State Government has taken steps to increase the honour of the teachers by providing them with pay and honorarium. He was addressing a divisional conference of teachers.

In the meeting, the Minister said that the State Government would make all efforts to increase the honor of the teacher. The Government has discontinued 'Karmi' culture and restored honorable position of teachers.

The pay of the teachers has also been increased much. The education minister Joshi said that such education system should be establish in the State in which all the educational activities should continue with the consent of the teachers. Joshi said that the government is considering it seriously that 25 per cent post of principal should be filled up by the promotion of senior teachers.

The teachers striking on the demand of equal work, equal pay and merger in the education department have come back to the work. But the Government is not fulfilling their demands so the token protest still continues by wearing black bandages, all the striking teachers reached the schools and registered their attendance. Later on they taught the students by bearing black badges.

On Saturday they received notices issued the collector for removing from service. All the teachers have given reply to the notice to their CAC by taking legal advice. The teachers are waiting for high court on 5 October. The court termed the strike illegal so the Government is not considering their demands.

The district president of Teachers' Congress Kuldeep Singh Rajput said that the teachers have returned to work today. But protest, demonstration is continuing. Reply of the notice of collector has been given through CAC. Now we would plead our case in the high court on 5 October that our strike is not illegal.

HINDU, SEP 24, 2015

### **Develop standards and assess teachers: expert**

**An expert suggested identifying gaps and finding partners to bridge them**

There is need for education institutions to identify gaps after the assessment and find partners to bridge the gaps, said an expert at the National Summit on Quality in Education, hosted by the CII Institute of Quality, in Bengaluru.

In order to bring in quality in education, schools and educational institutions were urged to conduct assessment for teachers and develop their own teacher standards.

Speaking at the National Summit on Quality in Education hosted by the CII Institute of Quality, A. Senthil Kumaran, Principal Counsellor and Head, Education Excellence at the CII Institute of Quality said that there is need for education institutions to identify gaps after the assessment and find partners to bridge the gaps. "There is also a need for institutions to chalk out a clear cut implementation programme and also have recognition programmes for high performing teachers. After the assessment and bridging the gap, they can find new targets that are definable," he said.

### **Sessions for educators**

The two-day workshop that ended on Wednesday had scores of teachers and educators who attended various sessions covering subjects like how technology could be used as an enabler, how students could be engaged in a more positive and powerful method.

Among other things, heads of the industry and academia came together to discuss how organisational excellence in companies can be used as models and replicated in classrooms. While Hariraj Vijaykumar, Global Head (Learning and Development), Cognizant Academy made presentations on the IT sector and about learning in the virtual world, Sailesh Shetty, Vice-President (Human Resources) of Toyota Kirloskar Motor threw light on how to improve productivity and skill of the labour force. The stark contrast between the presentations prompted the audience comprising teachers and educators to ponder which would work better in classrooms — human interface or gadgets.

### **‘Collaboration needed’**

Mr. Shetty also pointed out that there is a greater need for collaboration between the corporate and academia. Mr. Hariraj added that they are working with faculty on how to reorient and re-skill students. “We are also considering if we can use video conferencing on campuses and how we can intermingle with the two ecosystems,” he said.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, SEP 25, 2015

### **Class 12 marks cut out of NIT reckoning**

**Brajesh Kumar**

Class 12 board marks will not be taken into account for entry into National Institutes of Technology (NITs) from the 201617 academic year. A sub-committee of the NIT council, the highest decision-making body of the NITs, agreed unanimously on Tuesday to allow admission into the technical institutions based entirely on Joint Entrance Examination-Main (JEE-Main) scores.

The decision of the standing committee of the council of NITs will be ratified by the NIT council that meets on October 1. According to the existing policy, 40% weight is given to board marks and 60% to the JEE-Main score for admission to NITs. The decision to do away with the system comes in the backdrop of failure of the CBSE to come out with JEE-Main ranking lists on time.

The delays were due to extra time taken by state boards in submitting Class 12 marks. A number of state boards, including those of Bihar, Jharkhand, Telangana, Assam, Kerala and Karnataka, have delayed submitting their results in the past, leading to delays in

publishing ranking lists which in turn delayed the joint counselling for admissions to IITs and NITs.

The weightage system was introduced in 2012 by then HRD minister Kapil Sibal in the belief that students would pay more attention to board exams instead of concentrating on the curriculum of coaching institutes. Following the delay in publishing of ranking lists, the Smriti Irani-led HRD ministry formed a panel to study the weightage system and submit its recommendations.

The panel recommended scrapping of the weightage system, sources said. Its report argued the system had failed to check the menace of coaching centres and instead led students to opt for them to improve their board results.

This is the second UPA introduced decision related to examination reforms scrapped by the NDA government. Earlier, the controversial percentile system that governed students' eligibility for admissions into the IITs was changed in September last year. The system required successful candidates to be among the top-20 percentile scorers in the Class 12 exams of their respective boards.

The government changed it to "top 20 percentile or 75% marks in the state board examinations, whichever is lower" for a seat in the IITs.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, SEP 26, 2015

### **UGC wants to play moral police: Students**

Students from universities in Delhi protested outside the University Grants Commission (UGC) on Thursday against the proposed on campus safety guidelines which they described as akin to "moral policing". Among the several measures proposed by the central panel to enhance safety on university campuses are biometric attendance systems, CCTV cameras, armed guards and police stations.

Students from Delhi University and Jawaharlal Nehru University, who protesting outside the UGC office at Shahjahan Road carrying placards, said the new measures were a blatant effort to "suffocate and stifle" freedom of movement on campuses. The protesters

also submitted to the UGC a memorandum on which they had collected signatures from students across universities in the city.

“The UGC has claimed that the guidelines will transform higher educational institutions into oasis of safety, security and study. However, as anybody can see that these guidelines on safety of students on and off campuses are nothing but a blatant move to stifle and suffocate freedom of mobility and expression in universities and colleges,” said Sucheta De of All India Students Association (AISA) and a student of JNU.

Apart from installing biometric attendance systems, regular parent teacher meetings are another major problem area pointed out by the students from the five-page guidelines. “Most of the students in JNU are masters or research scholar. So are we supposed to call our parents for regular PTMs? Can’t the UGC see that if university authorities ‘report’ students’ personal relationships and political activism to parents, this may result in parents curtailing the education of students, especially women students?” said Ashutosh, a research scholar.

However, the UGC clarified that these were only guidelines and not regulations. “As far the allegation that guidelines are restriction on students’ freedom is concerned, I must reiterate that we value the freedom the most, but then freedom also has an element of duty, responsibility and accountability attached to it,” UGC chairman Ved Prakash said.

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

STATESMAN, SEP 30, 2015

### **Re-working UN forces**

Analysis of the impact of the peacekeeping-centric meet at the United Nations will have to await formal documents, details etc, yet already evident are two major “takeaways” - and it is difficult to determine which has greater significance. India’s call for a substantial overhaul of the system could actually be over-shadowed by China’s declaring its intent to play a greater role in the peacekeeping effort, and announcing the development of a stand-by force of 8,000 personnel. The “needle” arises not only from just numbers (India has offered another 850 soldiers) but from suspicions, in some quarters at least, that the move fits in with Beijing’s endeavours to expand its military footprint: already raising concerns in the Indian Ocean region.

China’s backers would hail it as a move to prove a readiness to shoulder additional responsibilities befitting a major power; others would wonder if that translated into attempting to stamp its own impression on global affairs - particularly in the troubled regions in Africa where it has already deployed its economic assets. It has also pledged \$100 million towards developing the African Union’s own force. An acid test, actually one with huge global ramifications, is whether China will (either under the UN umbrella or otherwise) line up with “western” militaries in tackling the international community’s prime concern: ISIS. Beijing does have an “Islamist” problem on its south-western fringe, thus thwarting ISIS would have both domestic and external facets.

Where China and India have displayed a degree of commonality is on the manner in which the UN operations are conducted: China has emphasised an “exit strategy”, India has demanded a greater role of the “force suppliers” in the formulation of mandates, strategies, tactics and command. The subcontinent provides the “boots on the ground” (Ethiopia and Rwanda have also committed large numbers, but their operations are generally confined to their region) but has only limited “say”. The United States does foot a substantial part of the bill raised by the light-blue berets, yet questions are being asked if that outweighs the hardships and risks to which soldiers from the third world are exposed.

The rather forthright position taken by Mr Narendra Modi will be appreciated in Indian military circles, its recent experiences have not been very happy. President Obama and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon would be satisfied with the “robust” (Obama’s own words) response in the shape of 30,000 more personnel being offered by a range of countries, yet there are ticklish issues involved. Having raised them, India must now strive to ensure that the system is suitably re-worked, and Mr Modi’s stress on the “moral force” that the Security Council commands is pregnant with meaning. As presently constituted the Council is short of that force.

## INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

TRIBUNE, SEP 29, 2015

**Modi, Obama push for strategic ties**

**India, US also agree to fight terror, climate change as PM concludes his US visit**

### **US, UK, France support UNSC bid**

- The US, Britain and France reaffirmed their support to India's permanent membership of the UNSC as text-based negotiations to expand the most powerful wing of the world body begin in November.

### **Kashmir is Indo-Pak matter: Obama**

- President Barack Obama agreed with PM Modi that Kashmir is a bilateral issue to be resolved between India and Pakistan.

### **Modi seated at UN high table**

- Modi was among the select few seated at the high table along with UN Secy-Gen Ban Ki-moon at the ritual Heads of State lunch in honour of the visiting dignitaries for the General Debate of the 70th General Assembly.

Agreeing to "further refine" the India-US strategic partnership, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Barack Obama today decided to step up cooperation in areas like security, counter-terrorism, defence, economy and climate change.

During the fifth meeting between the two leaders in over a year, Obama also reiterated support for India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council while Modi pressed for reform of the world body within a fixed time frame.

The climate change issue dominated the talks, with Obama saying India's leadership at the upcoming global conference in Paris in November will set the tone for decades to come after Modi underlined the need for concrete outcomes at the meet.

Underlining India's commitment to deal with the problem, Modi said there should be no negativity ahead of the global summit as he pressed for transfer of finances and technology to developing countries at affordable costs and make it accessible to those in need.

Setting the tone for the delegation-level meeting, Obama warmly received Modi by hugging him. "We discussed how we can further refine our strategic vision," said Obama after the hour-long talks.

He said the two leaders discussed how to move forward in various areas like security, economy, trade and investment as also cooperation in defence procurement.

"On all these issues, the Prime Minister has been an outstanding partner," Obama said. "Our meeting today was very productive in advancing some of our immediate priorities as also our broader strategic partnership," Modi said.

Appreciating the US President's "friendship, vision and commitment for the relationship", he said the bilateral partnership addresses a broad range of strategic and security concerns — counter-terrorism, cyber security and training.

"Our defence cooperation, including defence trade and training is expanding. As existing terrorism threats grow and new ones emerge, we have resolved to further deepen cooperation on counter-terrorism and radicalism," the Prime Minister said.

Modi also held separate meetings with his British counterpart David Cameron and French President Francois Hollande during which talks were held on key issues like terrorism, UNSC reforms and climate change. Modi held the bilaterals soon after he arrived from his weekend trip to the Silicon Valley where he met several technology leaders, including Apple CEO Tim Cook and Google's newly appointed Indian-origin CEO Sundar Pichai.  
— PTI

## LIBRARIES

ECONOMIC TIMES, SEP 29, 2015

### **Nehru Memorial Museum: A story of India from Raj to Swaraj**

By Manimugdha S Sharma

Nehru Memorial is caught in a controversy now with government wanting to make the memorial more inclusive and more reflective of independent India's achievements.

NEW DELHI: "They call me the Prime Minister of India, but it would be more appropriate if I were called the first servant of India—" these golden words of Pandit [Jawaharlal Nehru](#) are etched on the wall of [Nehru Memorial Museum](#) and Library. The institution is caught in a controversy now with the government wanting to make the memorial more inclusive and more reflective of independent India's achievements and critics calling it a ploy to obliterate the first PM's legacy.

But anyone who visits this fine institution with a mind free of ideological constraints will find that it's actually among those few fantastic places in today's India, nay anywhere in the world, where one could just walk in and see how the "jewel in the Crown" was transformed into an independent country that continues to stand tall in the league of powerful nations.

Syed Ali Kazim who teaches history at Aligarh Muslim University was associated with NMML, more specifically the [Nehru Memorial Fund](#), for seven years. He says it's unfortunate that the government wants to change NMML.

"The argument that this institution only eulogises Pandit Nehru and ignores the rest is entirely baseless. It has galleries on 1857, on the beginning of the National Movement, on the role of women in the freedom struggle, on revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh and Chandrasekhar Azad—a whole lot of things that few such memorials in the world can boast of. The museum is a pictorial journey of the making of India. Nehru lived here for 15 years as Prime Minister and died here. His mortal remains were taken for cremation from this very building. Who else deserves a memorial here?" Kazim said.

A visitor first enters Nehru's guest room before being guided to a gallery that has images of him as a child, both solos and with his parents. The gallery captures important events of Nehru's childhood such as his wearing of the sacred thread; his studies in England, first at Harrow and then at Trinity College, Cambridge; his practise as a barrister in England, marriage etc.

Next, one is taken to the first floor of the building where a huge ball room has snapshots of important projects of Nehruvian India—foundation of Chandigarh, the IITs, dams etc. Then there are galleries dedicated to the foundation of the Indian National Congress with rare photos of the first session in 1885 in Bombay, all the presidents up to Independence, revolutionaries like Khudiram Bose and Bagha Jatin, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and his INA—the list is really long. A unique gallery recreates the Midnight Session of the

Constituent Assembly where Nehru delivered his historic 'Tryst With Destiny' speech, setting the tone of the new nation at birth.

The museum also impartially showcases the activities of the [Muslim League](#) with rare photos of its leaders, including [Mohammed Ali Jinnah](#). What's even more interesting is that there are several rare clippings of newspaper articles (including The Times of India) of the time covering important events with some fascinating cartoons really bold for their time.

There is also a replica of Nehru's office at the ministry of external affairs, the bedroom of [Indira Gandhi](#), and the bedroom of Nehru left intact from the day he died. "These have been kept in such a way that one would think as if Nehru would just come out of the loo and say hello to you," Kazim said with a chuckle.

But on a more serious note, he says NMML has been doing some very important curatorial and historical work. "The oral history project, for instance, has been a great project. Written history, I would say, is just the tip of the iceberg. So NMML has interviewed people who fought for our freedom or lived in that era to bring out a comprehensive picture of a lost era. Any researcher anywhere in the world who has India as focus always comes to NMML. Such is the importance of this institution. It should be left as it is," Kazim said.

Military historian Mandeep Singh Bajwa agrees with Kazim's views. "Nehru made a great symbolic statement when he moved into the Flagstaff House—the residence of the commander-in-chief of the old [Indian Army](#), the number 2 in the power hierarchy of British India—and converted this symbol of imperial pride and pomp into a national institution. He has been under-appreciated for a long time. He certainly deserves a memorial here, because he was a man of letters who wrote such great books like Discovery of India (the original manuscript is a display item) and Glimpses of World History in prison without referring to notes. And he took over reins of a country torn asunder by Partition and accompanying communal hatred, yet managed to turn it around completely and set it on a path of progress. We owe much of our liberal democracy to Nehru. So what's the harm in leaving the memorial as it is?" Bajwa said.

The NMML is actually the story of India from Raj to Swaraj: a fact naysayers aren't willing to believe, but which is a fact nevertheless.

## PARLIAMENT

HINDU, SEP 29, 2015

### **Wages for the parliamentarians**

The idea of creating an Emoluments Commission to recommend salaries and allowances for Members of Parliament has not come a day too soon. The pay and reimbursements drawn by lawmakers may not be unusually high in India by global standards, but two points have been agitating the people in recent times: the power enjoyed by legislators to fix their own salaries and the loss suffered by the exchequer as day after day is lost to parliamentary logjam, resulting in MPs drawing daily allowances through whole sessions during which no business is transacted. In this backdrop, the proposal of the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs to establish an independent, three-member commission to fix the pay and allowances of parliamentarians is a sign that the government and the elected members themselves are sensitive to growing concern about the public expenditure incurred in their name. The proposal is on the agenda of the All-India Whips' Conference to be held in Visakhapatnam, and may form the basis for future legislation to de-link members of the legislature from the process of fixing their emoluments. Members of Parliament currently draw a monthly salary of Rs. 50,000, a constituency allowance of Rs. 45,000 and a sumptuary allowance of Rs. 15,000. They may also hire secretarial assistance for Rs. 30,000. They are entitled to daily allowances and travel concessions besides other perquisites. The present levels of pay and allowances, however, have not been revised since 2010.

If an independent body is created for the purpose, India will be following the example of the United Kingdom, where an Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority has been created by law to oversee and regulate 'business costs' or the expenditure incurred by lawmakers in their parliamentary functions, and fix their pay and pension. Such a mechanism may help put an end to criticism, and sometimes public outcry, over legislators rewarding themselves with pay hikes and additional allowances from time to time. In a country where public life is associated in the popular imagination with unbridled greed, and parliamentary representation is seen as a means to amass wealth, it will be tempting to wonder why lawmakers need a salary at all, or, looking at legislative work often coming to a standstill, to question the present pay structure or the need for regular revision. However, payment for legislative work is an important element in attracting public-spirited citizens to participative democracy. As a general principle, pay ought not to be the primary attraction for elective office, nor the privileges and perquisites that come with it. At the same time, it cannot be so low as to be a disincentive to the public for entering the legislature. An independent pay panel for parliamentarians is surely a welcome proposal.

HINDUSTAN TIMES, SEP 28, 2015

**Parliamentarians earn less than a legislator in Assam**  
**Saubhadra Chatterji**

For a fatter pay cheque, it pays to be a lawmaker in Assam than a member of Parliament. The monthly basic salary of a Rajya Sabha or Lok Sabha MP is a good Rs 10,000 less than legislators in the northeastern state, which pays its MLAs Rs 60,000 a month.

When parliamentarians gave themselves a threefold pay hike five years ago, it still didn't match the best salaries offered by some state assemblies.

But then, MPs can take heart from what's paid in Kerala which is at the opposite end of the spectrum with a fixed monthly allowance of Rs 1,000 for its MLAs.

Kerala also underscores the wide disparity in salaries and allowances paid to MLAs in different states.

If Assam lawmakers get more pay, their Uttarakhand counterparts are better off with the daily allowance — an additional fixed amount that a MP or an MLA gets if he or she attends House or its panel meetings. So much so that an Uttarakhand MLA gets daily allowance 100 times more than legislators in Punjab, where Rs 20 is the amount fixed. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana MLAs get the highest constituency allowance — Rs 83,000 a month—while West Bengal has the lowest at Rs 4,000.

TRIBUNE, SEP 27, 2015

**Govt proposes panel to decide MPs' pay and perks**

As per Article 106 of the Constitution, salaries of MPs are determined by an Act of 1954, amended from time to time.

Amid demands that MPs should not be allowed to decide their salaries, the government has proposed to set up a three-member panel to recommend pay and perks of lawmakers.

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs has proposed a three-member independent Emoluments Commission to recommend salaries and other allowances for the Members of Parliament.

The proposal is part of the agenda notes prepared for the two-day All India Whips' Conference to be held at Visakhapatnam, next week.

“The setting up of an independent Emoluments Commission for recommending the salaries and allowances of the Members of Parliament will not only put to rest the public outcry and media criticism over MPs themselves deciding their salaries, it will also provide an appropriate opportunity to take into consideration the huge responsibilities and the important role they play in our representative democracy.

“It would ensure that recommendations on Parliamentary salary are reached in a fair, transparent and equitable way.

Once there is consensus on setting up of the Commission, the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act, 1954, will be suitably amended," it said.

The general principles suggested by the Ministry for determination of salary are: that it should not be so low as to deter suitable candidates or so high as to make pay the primary attraction for the job. It says the salary should reflect the level of responsibility and those with outside interests should not be deterred from entering Parliament.

One of the principles suggested is that those who choose to make Parliament a full-time career should be adequately rewarded to reflect their responsibilities.

As per Article 106 of the Constitution, salaries of MPs are determined by an Act of 1954, amended from time to time.

The last revision in salary of MPs was made in 2010 during UPA II rule and the lawmakers at present get a basic salary of Rs 50,000 per month. Salaries of Members of State Legislatures are decided as per Article 195 of the Constitution.

### **A comparison**

As per a comparative analysis of Members of Parliament in 37 developing and developed countries, basic salary of MPs are in the range of a meagre Rs 7,952 in Tunisia to a high of Rs 6,16,675 per month in Israel. MPs of only in six countries — Tunisia, Venezuela, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Haiti and Panama are drawing salary less than that of Indian MPs.

According to a survey conducted by Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) of 138 chambers from 104 Parliaments, 69 chambers indicated that it is Parliament which determines the salaries of members. 31 of these stated that MPs' salaries are determined in reference to the Civil Service salary scale. In case of Bhutan, Namibia and the UK House of Commons, salaries are determined by independent bodies.

An MP in India gets a salary of Rs 50,000 per month. In addition, Rs 2,000 per day is paid as daily allowance when the MP signs the register while attending Parliament sessions or House committee meetings. The MP is entitled to Rs 45,000 constituency allowance every month — Rs 15,000 for stationery and Rs 30,000 to employ secretarial assistance staff.

MPs are also entitled for a government accommodation, air travel and train travel facilities, besides three landline and two mobile phones.

They also get a loan of Rs 4 lakh to buy a vehicle.

The proposal to set up the panel came after a Parliamentary Committee looking into the issue of salary and allowances of MPs had in June recommended a hundred per cent hike in salary, and constituency and office allowances of MPs and 75 percent raise in pension of ex-MPs apart from facilities for their "companions" in place of "spouses".

The panel, headed BJP MP Yogi Adityanath, also sought doubling of the existing Rs 50,000 salary of MPs and favoured increasing the pension of former parliamentarians from Rs 20,000 to Rs 35,000.

This led to a controversy and the government rejected most of the panel's recommendations.

The recommendations of the Joint Committee not accepted by Parliamentary Affairs Ministry included grant of one fourth of airfare also to those MPs who travel by train for official purposes, increasing the number of their air travel from 34 to 48, grant of 1st AC train facility to companion, housing society for members, provisions for housing loan, official vehicles and guest house facilities in state capitals, cabins and work stations in Parliament House premises.

The other proposals the government did not accept were: providing cars to the Chairpersons of Parliamentary Committees during inter-session and session periods, ten

economy class air tickets for ex-MPs and exemption to them from paying toll besides facility for AC first class travel with spouse or Companion, canteen facility for MPs for purchase of items of daily use etc.

Regarding the demand for enhancing constituency allowance, car loan limit and salary to Personal Assistants, the ministry said these will be considered in due course. It also said action is being taken with regard to enhancement of pension of former MPs.

Since some other demands fell outside the purview of Parliamentary Affairs Ministry, it referred them to HRD Ministry, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Ministry of Health, Niti Ayog and others.

At the conference, Chief Whips and Whips of various parties in Parliament and state legislatures will also discuss establishing inter-Party forums in Legislatures for better coordination to enable effective functioning of legislative bodies.

Delegates will also deliberate on the utility and shortcomings of the MPLADS (Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme) over the last 32 years and make suggestions, sources added. — PTI

## POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

STATESMAN, SEP 30, 2015

**No discordant note**

**Shyamal Datta**

On the occasion of the conferment of Awards for excellence in Rural Reporting and distribution of the Cushrow Irani Prize for Environmental Reporting, The Statesman organized a panel discussion on a topical subject - "Mamata Banerjee had a chance and she...." at Kala Mandir, Kolkata on September 16. The panelists were Md Salim, CPI-M MP, Dr Ajay Kumar, Congress MP, Seshadri Chari of the BJP, Prof. Abhirup Sarkar and myself with Ishan Joshi, journalist, as the Moderator.

Responding to the subject, I tried to clarify that the "chance" which constituted the very pivot of the discussion was not something that surfaced either fortuitously or by chance. It was a direct fall-out of a relentless and fierce struggle of over 15 years by Mamata Banerjee to convert adversities into opportunity, exploiting the groundswell of mass anger and fury over an all-round impairing impact of 34 years of the CPI-M led Left Front. In a solo effort, the Trinamul leader was able to galvanise the people's power to unseat the CPI-M, entrenched in power for decades. A herculean task indeed.

The 2011 Assembly election results were simply an electoral earthquake. It caused an eruption of people's dissent and disgust against the Marxist misrule. While describing the electoral triumph as unprecedented, people hailed Miss Banerjee as a giant killer, terminator and saviour. A saviour from all that went horribly wrong over a long period of time in Bengal, known to be a commercial and intellectual capital of India.

It is the people's court which is the main arbiter of the fate of political parties and their leaders. Since 2011, the people's court has allowed Miss Banerjee to win all elections from the Panchayats to Parliament with handsome margins over her political adversaries. The electoral triumphs have enabled her to establish supreme command, control, and supremacy on all fora of executive and legislature. From a state leader she has become a leader with political reckoning at the national level. From a mere 21 per cent in 2004, her party's share of votes shot up to over 39 per cent in 2014, defying the 'Modi wave'. The worst sufferer of her surge has been the CPI-M.

Notwithstanding this, the very phrasing of the subject of the panel discussion clearly shows considerable disillusionment of sections of the people with the way things have been handled in the state for over four years. Bemoaning sections of the people find no difference in the very character of governance of the pre and post 2011, and allege that one appears to be just a carbon copy of the other. The duo can be described as the two sides of the same coin with the only difference that one side is red while the other green.

On a more serious note, they regret that Miss Banerjee has made a serious blunder of using the same armoury of the CPI-M to draw strategy, tactics, tools, instruments and weapons and got tempted to manipulate levers of power using the police and

administration in order to enlarge and consolidate party influence and its hegemony on different fronts and segments of society. The healing touch that the situation required, remained woefully inadequate.

The despondency and cynicism of this scale and spread is attributed to the failure of Miss Banerjee to meet high expectations of the people generated in the aftermath of her victory. People nursed high hopes and huge expectations that she with enormity of goodwill and overwhelming support across the political spectrum, would be able to achieve a miracle of resurrecting Bengal from the debris of man-made decay and neglect, in no time. She would learn lessons in quick time from the vendetta and divisive politics of her adversaries and change the grammar of politics. She would take no time to put in place a new script of politics with a focus on engagement and not confrontation, to ensure peace, order and stability as a prelude to the revival of Bengal through industrialisation, employment generation and social well-being.

Contrary to expectations, gaps have come to surface between hopes and reality, between rhetoric and results and between intent and action. But Miss Banerjee is fortunate to enjoy a beacon of hope that the soured memories of 34 years are still fresh in the minds of people and the scars of wounds suffered visible in both rural and urban areas. These do not as yet induce any major shift in the allegiance of people away from the ruling party or towards any viable alternative. The May 2016 elections are going to show whether in the peoples' court, Mamata Banerjee still enjoys majority support or do the elections oblige her detractors fishing for their 'chance' in her failure.

In this backdrop, any insinuation that Miss Banerjee with a mixed track record of over four years, has missed the chance of making a difference in the governance of the troubled state, may be viewed as somewhat presumptuous. It may not be prudent to expect that the people who took 34 years to vote out the CPI-M and lay the red carpet for Miss Banerjee, would withdraw their support from her government just when she had completed the very first term in office. Such a reaction will be at variance with the current all-India trend, whereby people have generally, refrained from pulling out their support from the party in power just after the first five years in power. People have preferred to wait and provide a chance to the party in power to improve and make things better.

In the context of West Bengal, a large section of the people appear to have realised that the cancer that has eaten into the vitals of society cannot be cured overnight. It would require enormity of time, labour and resources, besides commitment to treat the malignancy and make progress towards a turnaround. The process of recovery and revival is going to be a long-haul and time consuming. What makes matters change fast is the firm political resolve of a dynamic and visionary leader and strong, well-oiled and effective systems and institutions of the state in existence.

In politics, one should avoid making a mistake of writing a premature obituary on political parties and leaders. Some of them have an uncanny knack of bouncing back to create a chance and encash the same mobilising popular support. Therefore, one should

never be in a hurry or haste in politics to contrive a 'chance' when its time has not come. Hold patience for prospects to mature. Impatience might abort the 'chance'. At the end of the day, it is finetuned interplay of the dynamics of social base, competitive politics and instrument of force that helps determine the quality of human life. It also helps people to make a choice. As of now, no discordant note is heard in the finetuning to cast major shadows on the stature and prospects of Mamata Banerjee.

## POPULATION

STATESMAN, SEP 28, 2015

### **Bengal's topsy-turvy population growth**

**B.P. Syam Roy**



The population scenario in West Bengal, specially the decadal growth rates never come up as a serious issue of public debate for a variety of reasons, the prime one being inclination to avoid harsh realities. The incremental addition of population of a section of a religious minority is like a fluid bomb that has been ticking every second in West Bengal.

West Bengal began with a population of 2,62,99,980 in census 1951 and by 2011 it had gone up to 91,276,115 with 13.8 per cent decadal growth and registering in the process 3.47 times growth since 1951. The density of population has shot up from 296 to 1028, making West Bengal the second most densely populated State of the country.

Beneath this alarming growth, there is another story that has emerged from the recent release of religion-wise Census data, 2011. It is a pointer to an impending demographic disaster. Of the two major religions, the Hindus began with 1,94,62,706 in 1951 and reached 6,43,85,546 in 2011; the population thus went up 3.3 times in 60 years. The Muslims, after Partition started with 49,25,496 in 1951 and had reached 2,46,54,825 in 2011, nearly a five-fold growth. As per the report of the Census Commissioner of India, the decadal rate of growth of the Muslim population is 21.8 per cent against the decadal growth of Hindus at 10.8 per cent in 2011, i.e the decadal rate of growth of Muslims is more than double that of Hindus.

The decadal growth rate is usually taken as an indicator of the changing character of population. This growth rate is accordingly taken up to understand changing trend of composition of Hindus and the Muslims in West Bengal in Table 1.

1 DECADAL POPULATION GROWTH OF WEST BENGAL			
Census Year	Decadal growth of West Bengal	Decadal growth of Hindu population	Decadal growth of Muslim population
1951	13.22	NA	NA
1961	32.80	32.63	36.48
1971	26.87	25.75	29.76
1981	23.17	21.37	29.55
1991	24.73	21.09	36.89
2001	17.71	14.23	25.91
2011	13.93	10.8	21.8

It emerges from Table-1 that the decadal growth rate of Hindus has been less than the West Bengal average in every Census since 1951. It shows at the same time that the decadal growth rates of Muslims have always been significantly higher than rates of growth of Hindus as well as the West Bengal average. The Muslim growth rate was 8.18 percentage points higher in 1981, 15.80 points higher in 1991, 11.68 points higher in 2001 and 11 points higher in 2011 than the Hindu rate of growth.

The Muslim rate of growth is also 7.87 points higher than the average decadal growth of population of West Bengal in 2011. From a demographic perspective, such high differentials in growth rate consistently over time are indeed very alarming.

The relative proportion of a religious community is another indicator to understand the flow character of population growth. It would be desirable now to see how the relative proportion of Religious Population in West Bengal has changed over the years. In Table 2, the proportion of population growth religion wise has been shown to understand the trend of changed demographic character from 1951 to 2011.

2 RELATIVE PROPORTION OF RELIGIOUS OF POLPULATION IN WB							
Religious Communities	1951	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001	2011
All	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Hindus	78.45	78.80	78.11	76.96	74.72	72.47	70.53
Muslims	19.85	20.00	20.46	21.51	23.61	25.25	27.01
Christians	0.70	0.59	0.57	0.59	0.56	0.64	0.72
Sikhs	0.12	0.10	0.08	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.06
Buddhist	0.33	0.32	0.27	0.29	0.30	0.30	0.30
Jains	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.07	0.05	0.07	0.06
Others	0.46	0.11	0.44	0.48	0.67	1.12	1.03
Religion not stated	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01	0.01	0.07	0.25

It reveals that Hindus have been losing their prominent position in numbers with each Census after partition and the Muslims have been leap-frogging with higher presence in relative proportion of Religious Population in West Bengal.

The macro image of the growth of Muslim population in West Bengal and the points of its critical areas can be better appreciated if the state scenario is broken down into district figures, as in Table 3.

3 DECADAL GROWTH RATES IN DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL SINCE 2001						
Darjeeling	23.79	22.14	44.37	14.8	10.41	23.08
Jalpaiguri	21.45	23.63	31.36	13.9	11.41	20.75
Cooch Behar	14.19	12.78	18.59	13.7	11.53	19.82
Malda	24.78	17.68	30.65	21.2	18.06	24.99
Dakshin Dinajpur	22.15	20.03	32.01	11.5	10.81	14.33
Uttar Dinajpur	28.72	22.84	32.01	23.2	17.41	29.80
Bardhaman	11.96	12.82	15.34	11.9	10.44	17.27
Bankura	13.82	10.16	28.87	12.7	12.64	21.16
Birbhum	17.99	14.23	25.19	16.1	12.18	22.70
Purulia	14.02	4.59	35.74	15.5	12.14	25.76
Hooghly	15.77	14.06	20.77	9.5	8.48	13.97
E Medinipur	14.87	13.71	21.16	15.4	14.34	25.29
W Medinipur	15.76			13.9		
Kolkata	3.93	0.16	18.9	-1.7	-3.15	-0.3
Howrah	14.57	10.90	26.02	13.5	10.35	21.66
24 Parg (N)	22.69	22.31	22.97	12.0	9.39	19.43
24 Parg (S)	20.85	23.62	34.17	18.2	13.34	32.18
Nadia	19.54	18.58	21.9	12.2	9.78	18.14
Murshidabad	23.76	15.82	28.35	21.1	11.93	26.02
West Bengal	17.77	14.22	25.91	13.8	10.80	21.80

The spurt in the growth and size of Muslim population has taken place without any consideration for the carrying capacity of such incremental population and with complete disregard to the national family planning programme and quality of life. This would all be evident as with every census, higher growth rate of Muslims pushes up its corresponding proportion in all the districts of West Bengal as shown in Table 4.

4 PROPORTIONS OF HINDUS AND MUSLIMS IN THE DISTRICTS OF WEST BENGAL SINCE 1961														
	Hindu	Muslim	Hindu	Muslim										
Darjeeling	81.71	1.14	80.27	3.18	81.45	3.01	79.44	3.64	77.95	4.55	76.92	5.31	74.0	5.69
Jalpaiguri	84.18	9.74	85.41	9.55	86.81	8.97	87.50	8.75	84.81	10.04	83.30	10.85	81.51	11.51
Cooch Behar	70.90	28.94	76.05	23.77	78.56	21.25	79.01	20.78	76.44	23.34	75.50	24.24	74.05	25.54
Malda	62.92	36.97	53.64	46.18	56.63	43.13	54.49	45.27	52.25	47.49	49.28	49.72	47.99	51.27
U Dinajpur	69.30*	29.94*	59.87*	39.41*	63.07*	35.89*	63.26*	35.79*	54.20	45.35	51.72	47.36	49.31	49.92
Bardhaman	83.73	15.60	84.30	15.17	82.21	17.17	81.45	17.60	79.69	19.55	78.89	19.78	77.85	20.73
Bankura	91.16	4.40	93.68	4.39	90.85	4.85	89.87	5.65	87.15	6.63	84.35	7.51	84.34	8.08
Birbhum	83.73	15.60	84.30	15.17	82.21	17.17	81.45	17.60	79.69	19.55	78.89	19.78	62.28	37.06
Purulia	NA	NA	93.13	5.99	92.89	4.64	91.63	5.45	90.95	5.98	83.42	7.12	80.99	7.76
Hooghly	86.52	13.27	87.11	12.66	86.89	12.89	85.91	13.76	84.88	14.52	83.65	15.12	82.88	15.77
E Medinipur	91.78*	7.17*	92.26*	7.60*	90.65*	7.74*	89.55*	8.70*	86.81*	10.78*	85.58*	11.33*	85.24	14.59
W Medinipur	91.78*	7.17*	92.26*	7.60*	90.65*	7.74*	89.55*	8.70*	86.81*	10.78*	85.58*	11.33*	85.51	10.49
Kolkata	83.41	12.00	83.94	12.78	82.90	14.75	81.89	15.74	80.60	17.17	77.68	20.27	76.50	20.60
Howrah	83.45	16.22	83.31	16.36	81.81	18.00	79.50	20.17	77.46	22.22	74.98	24.40	72.90	26.20
24 Parg(N)	73.90*	25.35*	79.95*	23.39*	77.26*	22.43*	77.16*	22.50*	75.46	24.17	75.23	24.22	73.45	25.82
24 Parg(S)	73.90*	25.35*	75.95*	23.39*	72.96	26.05	72.21	26.82	69.12	29.94	65.86	33.24	63.16	35.57
Nadia	77.03	22.36	74.95	24.38	75.91	23.34	75.20	24.08	74.35	24.92	73.75	25.41	72.15	26.76
Murshidabad	44.60	55.24	44.08	55.86	43.46	56.34	41.15	58.57	35.39	61.40	35.92	63.67	33.20	66.27
West Bengal	75.45	19.85	78.80	20.0	78.11	20.46	76.96	21.51	74.72	23.61	72.47	25.25	70.53	27.01

\*DENOTES UNDIVIDED DISTRICTS

The TFR (Total Fertility Rate) which means average number of children born to a woman during her entire reproductive period is much higher for Muslim women in all the districts of West Bengal, as per an NFHS study based on Census, 2001 when the TFR for Hindus was estimated to be 2.2 (just above the replacement level of 2.1) and that of Muslims at a whopping 4.1.

District-wise distribution of TFRs in West Bengal (2001 estimates) is shown in Table 5.

5 DISTRICT-WISE DISTRIBUTION OF TFRS (2001 EST.)			
	Total	Hindu	Muslim
West Bengal	2.6	2.2	4.1
Darjeeling	2.1	2.2	4.7
Jalpaiguri	2.8	2.8	4.3
Cooch Behar	3.0	2.7	4.2
U Dinajpur	4.3	3.7	6.1
D Dinajpur	3.3	3.0	4.2
Malda	4.0	3.5	5.1
Murshidabad	3.5	2.7	4.3
Birbhum	3.0	2.8	4.1
Bardhaman	2.3	2.2	3.1
Nadia	2.4	2.0	3.5
North Parganas 24	2.1	1.6	3.4
Hugli	2.0	1.8	3.0
Bankura	2.6	2.5	4.3
Purulia	3.1	3.1	4.8
Medinipur	2.6	2.5	4.2
Howrah	2.1	1.6	3.6
Kolkata	1.4	1.0	2.4
South Parganas 24	3.0	2.3	4.5

It would appear from the table that in Uttar Dinajpur, the TFR of Muslim women was as high as 6.1, followed by 5.1 in Malda. In 11 districts, the TFR of Muslim women was above 4, and in 5 districts it was 3 and above. Only in Kolkata district was it less than 3. The high TFR of Muslim women is the single biggest factor for the growth of the Muslim population and more particularly for the increased proportionate share of Muslims (25.2 per cent in 2001) of West Bengal. The percentage of Muslims in some districts in 2001

was – Murshidabad - 63.67; Malda - 49.72; Uttar Dinajpur - 47.36; Birbhum - 35.08 and South 24 Parganas - 33.2.

Given the almost identical social environment in the districts of West Bengal, the fertility behaviour alone may not be the only ground for this phenomenal growth as it defies all logic of natural human procreation. It is apparent that a substantial portion of this growth is due to influx and infiltration.

The incremental addition of Muslim population in 2011 was to the extent of 3,44,667 in Uttar-Dinajpur and 2,65,258 in undivided West Dinajpur; 3,83,879 and 4,08,980 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in Malda; 2,12,874 and 2,40,193 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in Birbhum; 4,12,208 and 2,26,258 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in Howrah; 4,04,219 and 4,20,626 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in North 24-parganas; 2,10,284 and 2,12,400 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in Nadia and 8,25,160 and 9,72,193 respectively in 2001 and 2011 in Murshidabad. The political courage of all national and state parties is the dire need of the hour to ensure that West Bengal does not continue to remain a safe place for demographic assault and also a safe haven for influx and infiltration.

Unfortunately in India and especially in West Bengal, the subject of population growth has been mixed up with vote bank politics and as a result the demographic assault continues unabated without any public outcry. The silent march of numbers is too eloquent to be ignored.

Unfortunately, efforts are usually made to ensure that religious data do not come into the public domain for any objective and bias-free analysis. When such religious data does come, “secularists” raise a red flag against any objective analysis on ground of “communal distaste”, “communal passion”, “obsession with numbers” and the like, to pre-empt new learning on religious data.

Such secularists do not appear to advocate adherence to the national norm of two children in the interests of a higher quality of life of fellow citizens or cry against infiltration or address the limits of the state to absorb an unsustainable population.

The writer is a former Member of the State Finance Commission, West Bengal.

## PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

BUSINESS STANDARD, SEP 24, 2015

**Kanika Datta: Government Maximus**

Narendra Modi may discover that his admirable aim of Minimum Government, Maximum Governance would demand deeper institutional change than he bargained for Kanika Datta The promise of Minimum Government, Maximum Governance (MGMG from here on) is tantalising. How this concept will work is unclear but Prime Minister Narendra Modi has made a start by having one of the smallest councils of ministers of the last three governments with 66 ministers. This is still humungous compared to the governments of the seventies and eighties but consider that the predecessor National Democratic Alliance under Atal Bihari Vajpayee ended up with an 88-member council. MGMG has been a theme since the first big dose of delicensing in 1991, only earlier regimes weren't so savvy about branding their efforts. With the Vajpayee government it was privatisation. With the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) it was Public Private Partnerships and later, when complaints of "policy paralysis" abounded, a National Investment Board was proposed as a "mother of all single windows" to clear projects above a certain threshold (ultimately, the Prime Minister's Office did this job). All of these have had varying degrees of success but incremental impacts on India's reputation as an easy place to live and work. To understand why even the most MGMG-committed prime minister will struggle to reduce intrusive "government" in favour of "governance" you only have to go through the list of decisions the Cabinet clears each week. Even a random reading will demonstrate the deeply embedded nature of government in a vast range of activities, some of them mystifying and most a waste of ministerial and, more importantly bureaucratic, time. Here, for instance, is a decision from a November 2004 Cabinet meeting. It is to approve an amendment of the Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum Act to provide for "automatic cessation of the membership of an MP elected on the body of the institute in the event of his/her becoming a Minister, or Speaker or Deputy Speaker, Lok Sabha or Deputy Chairperson of Rajya Sabha".

Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute is a research institute that was set up in 1973 on land gifted by the erstwhile Travancore royal family and was declared an Institution of National Importance under the department of science and technology by an Act of Parliament in 1980. Since it comes under a central statute, even minor changes like this one requires Cabinet-level clearance. And, here's some *déjà vu*. In the same month, the Cabinet also approved the extension of the Justice Mukherjee Commission. This was a one-man commission set up under Mr Vajpayee's NDA to enquire into the controversy surrounding Subhas Chandra Bose's death. Why did the UPA, six months into its busy first term, bother with this? Because this "enquiry" had been ordered by the Calcutta High Court, no less. In 2006, when the report was finally tabled, it concluded that the controversial freedom fighter had not died in an air crash in Taiwan (then Formosa) but could now be presumed dead (no surprise, he would have been 109 years old). The government rejected those findings but the late Mr Bose's call on governmental time and energy is remarkable, judging by recent events.

The same Cabinet that raised the foreign direct investment ceiling in telecom from 49 to 74 per cent and introduced legislation for a pension regulator, the right to information and the rural employment guarantee programme, to name some of its big-ticket announcements, also had to apply its mind to such issues as: an audio-visual co-production agreement between India, UK and Northern Ireland, renaming Varanasi and Jaipur airports, approving a rehabilitation package for one British India Corporation (a terminal case for decades), a National Policy for the computerisation of the judiciary, a Meat and Poultry Processing Board (yes, it exists!) and the repeal of the Spirituous Preparations Control Act. The fare and subsidy for Haj pilgrim is also a standard annual fixture for every Cabinet. Considering these flights take place every year, shouldn't this be a ministry concern rather than a Cabinet-level one? The list of Cabinet decisions by the current government isn't half as much fun, though there's a preponderance of branded programmes demanding approval. Unchanged is the sheer reach of the central government as evident in the 20- to 30-odd decisions in each meeting, from reviving state-owned units to approving minor agreements with countries (including one on homeopathy with Mauritius, hardly a pressing item in relations between our two countries) and signing off on posts in a variety of institutions. We know that Cabinet meetings do not actually expend a great time of time on the agenda since the positions are decided ahead after the Cabinet secretariat circulates it. Still, if you look at the issue from bottom up, the lives and fortunes of many people are sometimes contingent on its decisions. Which is why even the energetic Mr Modi may discover that his admirable aim would demand deeper institutional change than he bargained for.

## URBAN DEVELOPMENT

HINDU, SEP 24, 2015

**State to pump in big money for its own 'smart cities'**

SHANKAR BENNUR

**Bengaluru, Mysuru and Kalaburagi to be developed**

Bengaluru, Mysuru and Kalaburagi, which missed the 'Smart City' bus, will be developed into smart cities by the State on the model of the cities nominated under the Centre's Smart Cities Mission by utilising its own funds, Minister for Urban Development Vinay Kumar Sorake said on Wednesday. "There won't be any change in the development, except that the complete funding will be from the State," he said.

The Karnataka Urban Infrastructure Development & Finance Corporation (KUIDFC) had been asked to work on the estimates on the State's plans for the three cities.

On the funding pattern, the Minister said Bengaluru had been getting around Rs. 2,500 crore annually from the government for its development. Similarly, Mysuru and Kalaburagi had also been getting special grants of Rs. 200 crore a year.

Under the Smart Cities' mission, each city will get Rs. 100 crore from the Centre, while the State has to contribute a matching grant of Rs. 100 crore. "We will release additional funds for fulfilling the State's smart city goals — Rs. 1,000 crore additional for Bengaluru and Rs. 100 crore additional for Mysuru and Kalaburagi — for the next five years," he said.

HINDU, SEP 27, 2015

**Indian urbanisation 'messy', reforms needed: World Bank**

Terming India's urbanisation as "messy and hidden", a World Bank report called for initiatives at the policy and institutional level to tap the economic potential it offers.

Terming India's urbanisation as "messy and hidden", a World Bank report called for initiatives at the policy and institutional level to tap the economic potential it offers.

"Although they have made progress, India and other South Asian countries can make better utilisation of opportunities that urbanisation provides them to transform their economies to join the ranks of richer nations," it said in a report titled 'Leveraging Urbanisation in South Asia'.

The World Bank said there has been difficulty in dealing with pressures that increased urban populations put on basic services, infrastructure, land, housing and environment, fostering "messy and hidden" urbanisation.

This, in turn, has helped constrain the region's full realisation of the prosperity and livability benefits of urbanisation, it said, adding that at the institutional level, there would be benefits from improvements in ways in which towns and cities are governed and financed.

### **Reforms in spotlight**

The report put reforms in the spotlight, saying these are required to address three fundamental deficits in empowerment of local governing bodies, resources and accountability.

“Inter-governmental fiscal relations must be improved to address empowerment; practical ways must be identified to increase the resources available to local governments to allow them to perform their mandated functions and mechanisms must be strengthened to hold local governments accountable for their actions,” the report highlighted.

To tackle messy urbanisation and bring about lasting improvements in both prosperity and livability, policies are also required to improve the ways in which cities are connected and planned, working of land and housing markets, and cities' resilience to natural disasters and the effect of climate change.

### **Sustainable growth**

“If managed well, urbanisation can lead to sustainable growth by increasing productivity, allowing innovation and new ideas to emerge,” said World Bank MD and COO Mulyani Indrawati, who is on a three-day visit to India.

The report said urbanisation has been relatively slow in India. — PTI

## **WILDLIFE CONSERVATION**

HINDU, SEP 24, 2015

**Wild elephants in Karnataka to get unique identification code**

MOHIT M. RAO

The Karnataka Forest Department has started the process in national parks, including Nagarhole and Bandipur.

As fanciful as it sounds, imagine an Aadhaar card-type unique identification system for elephants.

The expected scenario is this: An elephant strolls in the forest, and the tracker – or a camera trap – quickly sees the identification marks. This is correlated with a catalogue of elephants and their identification marks. With the “code” obtained, other details such as its migratory paths, previous movements, age and so on can be detected.

While it is bound to take time to develop such a system, the Karnataka Forest Department has started the process in national parks in Nagarhole, Bandipur, BRT Tiger Reserve, Cauvery Wildlife Sanctuary and M.M. Hills Sanctuary.

### **Cameras to help in identification**

“We have cameras in these parks that have been used to identify tigers and leopards. Elephants too can be identified. Just like the big cats, each elephant has unique identification marks: shapes and cuts in ears, tail, size of tusks and even toe nails that can help us keep track of the mammals,” said Ravi Ralph, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife).

The system will primarily focus on male tuskers, which tend to roam the forests alone and are most vulnerable to poaching or most likely to raid crops, he said. However, unlike the tiger monitoring system, this proposal faces logistical challenges. While there are roughly 300 tigers in the State, the population of elephants is over 6,000. Officials also point out that tigers remain territorial, allowing for easier camera trapping in a particular area, but elephants are largely migratory. And, while a massive camera infrastructure exists – with Nagarhole and Bandipur having nearly 1,400 camera traps – the entire set-up had been designed for tigers. “The cameras are placed at a height of around three feet to capture tigers and leopards. For elephants, we will have to place them above 10 feet. But, even by making modifications to the cameras and raising them to this height, we may miss out on smaller calves. Elephant experts will be consulted to aid us in designing this system,” said H.C. Kanthraj, Director of Nagarhole National Park.

With the help of the code, details such as the animal’s migratory paths, previous movements and age can be detected