Vox Populi

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2016-2017

YEAR 2016-17

Department of Political Science
Miranda House
University of Delhi

National Seminar organized by Department of Political Science, Jan 24-25, 2017

Faculty of Department of Political Science

III YEAR

II YEAR

I YEAR

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III YEAR

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"I do not agree with what you say but I will defend to death your right to say it."

-Voltaire

The humankind is familiar with the story of Adam and Eve and the curse of the forbidden tree. In the biblical history, the first encounter of the unaware couple with the apple is where the realization of the ability to distinguish between 'good' or 'evil' and 'right' or 'wrong' begins. As students of Politics, we know there is an eerie resemblance; there is an undeniable change in the way we perceive things after we are acquainted with the discipline of Political Science. We have become aware. We question We engage. We react. We reflect. And it would be wrong to deny the fact that it is our acquaintance and engagement with the discipline of political science that has caused these changes. It would be unfair to not accredit the subject for having opened for us newer broader horizons.

We as students, can give back to the subject, only more questions, more curiosities, more doubts. To be able to do that, would be our achievement. For the minds that think, question.

The 11th edition of the Vox Populi - Annual magazine of the department of Political Science is a reflection of the questions and uncertainties that remain unanswered. The magazine has reflections from students and teachers on a wide array of views, opinions, agreements and disagreements. The recent times are fraught with problems that appear bigger than ever. Issues like increasing fundamentalism, global terrorism, manufactured ideologies and the debate on nationalism have clouded the faiths of many in the discipline and practice of politics.

'Is democracy really a sham?' or is there hope? A silver lining? Despite all the accusations and allegations, the repression and suppression, we are seeing strong unafraid voices rise up. These are fearless, aware, responsible voices that are nothing but only strengthening our political system. Vox Populi 2017 is a dedication to all these voices. For they really understand that –

"The beginning of thought is in disagreement, not only with others but also with ourselves."

-Eric Hoffe

Dr. Jayashree Pillai, Associate Professor

With the publication of the current edition of Vox Populi, the department of Political Science, Miranda House is crossing the eleventh milestone, a significant occasion for us to celebrate. For over a decade now, Vox Populi has been the voice of the department, a reflection of opinions, views and experiences of students and faculty members. Contributed, edited and brought out by the students of the department, this annual journal is much awaited by the college community every year and I hope this Eleventh edition of Vox Populi will delight one and all.

This year has been very fulfilling for the department, with very notable activities held by students and faculty in the background of a smooth and successful academic atmosphere. The academic year began with an interactive session on U.S. Presidential Elections by Mr. Jonathan Kessler, Director, North India Office, U.S. Embassy on August 19, 2016.

A Certificate Course on Fundamentals of Law consisting of 20 modules was conducted by Apurv Mishra, from September 26 to October 6, 2016.

The department anchored in Miranda House the Vigilance Awareness Week celebrations in collaboration with ONGC on November 1, 2016, where we had Shri S.N. Dhingra, former Justice, Delhi High Court and presently Member, Competition Commission of India and Chairperson of Appellate Authority under Chartered Accounts Act, Company Secretaries Act and ICWA. The event was held as a part of the National Vigilance Awareness Week, announced by the Government of India.

The National Seminar-cum-Workshop on 'Language, Ethics and Governance: Decoding Logic, Argumentation and Rhetoric in Indian Politics' sponsored by University Grants Commission and conducted by the department of Political Science on January 24-25, 2017 showcased interdisciplinary issues of Language and Philosophy in understanding Politics. The seminar which was spread over 25 sessions had eminent speakers from various disciplines. It saw the involved participation by over 180 people from the academic community and government. The workshop for students on Logical Thinking and Writing Skills had over a hundred participants who were introduced to the basics of academic writing and research. Other highlights of the national seminar included a special address by Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, Minister of Industry and Commerce, keynote address by Prof. Radhakrishnan Pillai from the University of Mumbai, and presentations by Prof. Madhulika Banerjee, Prof. Yogendra Yadav, Prof. Ujjwal Singh and our own young colleague Ms. Pushpa Singh. This academic session, the college was under the review of National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) for gradation as per UGC rules. As a result, our department, both students and faculty, worked together to come up to the expected standards. The experience was challenging but rewarding too, as we understood better our strengths and weaknesses in the changing structure of education.

In this academic session, a number of scholars participated in various seminars and class room interactions including Ms. Shubhrastha, Mr. Ashish Joshi, Dr. Ram Puniyani, Lt. Gen. Syed Ata Hasnain, Ms. Chamitri Rambukwella and Mr. Vira Sathidar.This year Ecclesia 2017 began with the inaugural lecture by Prof. Madhulika Banerjee on Policy, Governance and Citizenship: Structuring a truly Democratic Relationship on February 16, 2017. This will be followed by two days of intensive seminars and inter-college competitive events in the first week of April 2017.

This eleventh edition of Vox Populi follows the tradition of encouraging diverse thinking and writing, with no thrust on promoting a particular theme. I believe this step has led to a vibrant issue, which is more interesting and involved. The opinions expressed in this publication are strictly of the individuals. It is generally assumed that professional and personal lives are two separate spaces and they should not overlap. But in practice, they do not form water tight compartments. Your professional life overshadows your personal life and vice versa. The boundaries merge at some places and one affects the other. This phenomenon may not be understood by human resource professionals as it is an emotional matter. Emotions are what drive career ambitions and personal goals. So, when a single entity called a person divides himself or herself into two spheres of professional and personal lives, in no way do they remain isolated islands, there is an undercurrent that determines their actions. The current academic year, has been a tough time for many of us. A few of our colleagues Pushpa, Rajni, Hena and me lost our fathers, which shook our personal lives but courage and support from families and friends helped us in fulfilling our professional responsibilities. We tried our best to overcome our personal loss and ensure that it didn't impact our professional work, and by the grace of God, we have been successful.

I would like to congratulate the Student's Union President Preeti and her team for doing exemplary work over the whole academic year. The editorial team of Aishwarya, Ambi, Chandni, Charukeshi, Kajol, Medha, Nilza, Nitmem and Madhubala, under the guidance of faculty advisor Ms. Pushpa Singh, deserves kudos for their hard work and dedication in bringing out this journal on time.

Let us hope that the culture of the department as showcased by Vox Populi and Ecclesia continues in future and the best is yet to come!

Thank you.

Preeti Kumari,

President, Department of Political Science

The last academic year has been a fast paced one, marked by diverse activities. As they are archived through Vox Populi and become a part of the Department's history, I am compelled to pause and look back. In that reflection, I feel a sense of accomplishment for I have learnt innumerable lessons of life and leadership. Leadership is not at all about the person at the top of the hierarchy, but about each and every person involved. The team of students formally known as the Students' Union and informally called the 'Trailblazers' by each other have to their credit an eventful academic session and many successes. From the many seminars, study sessions, to the UGC sponsored National Seminar, the Students' Union with the entire students' body and support of faculty has made many things possible. In the process, we have also made sure that we critically look at our work and strive towards excellence. We have together navigated a journey of immense growth and learning. I hope these lessons guide us through the many important roles we take up in the future.

I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude towards Roy Ma'am, for the finest learnings and rigorous training in management and leadership I received from her during the Innovation Project in the year 2015-16. The learnings are for a lifetime and have been my strength throughout. I further extend my gratitude towards Pillai Ma'am, Teacher-In-charge for her constant support and guidance throughout. I also wish to congratulate the Editorial Board led by Pushpa Ma'am which has worked extremely hard to make this edition possible.

A University is unthinkable without spaces for individuals where they can express themselves sans any fear, where they can engage with ideas from across the spectrum. The 11th edition of Vox Populi is an important contribution to this idea of a free world and University. I hope this endeavour towards archiving ideas also goes a long way in cultivating a culture of rigorous academic writing in undergraduate studies.

The two day UGC sponsored National Seminar on "Language, Ethics and Governance: Decoding Logic, Argumentation and Rhetoric in Indian Politics" convened by Dr. Jayashree Pillai was organized on 24-25 January 2017 at Miranda House. The event saw academic deliberations and active participation of students. The sessions brought forth new research and enriching discourses on Indian Politics, Nationalism and Governance in an interdisciplinary framework. The workshop on Writing skills and Logical thinking witnessed great participation from students across several disciplines and colleges.

The seminar brought together ideas from Language and Philosophy to understand Politics through an interdisciplinary lens. The seminar brought together speakers from a diverse background for over 25 sessions. Over 180 participants engaged in active deliberations over key issues of Politics.

Keynote Speaker
Dr. Radhakrishnan Pillai, Professor, University of Mumbai

Special Lecture
Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman
Hon'ble Minister of Commerce and Industry (Independent Charge)
Government Of India

Chair
Mr. Alok Bansal, India Foundation
Mr. Pervez Majeed Lone
Mr. Tanveir Aeijaz
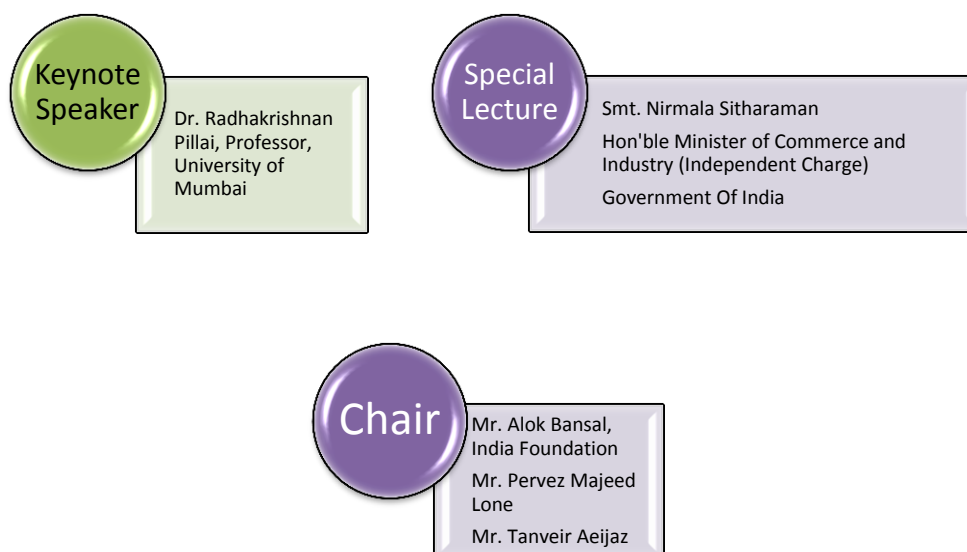
The Workshop on writing Skills had over 100 participants who were introduced to the basics of Academic Writing and research.

The Valedictory address by Prof. Yogendra Yadav ended on an inspiring note, emphasizing on the importance of constructive conversations and the unending quest for truth, which is the ultimate purpose of politics

Speakers

1. Ms Pushpa Singh, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Miranda House
2. Tripta Sharma Asst Professor, Dept of Political Science, Zakir Hussain College
3. Arun Singh, Ph.D Scholar, Dept of Political Science, University of Delhi

4. Minarul Islam Biswas
5. Dr. Shubendu Ranjan Raj
6. Shiveshwar Kundu
7. Dr. Bulbul Dhar James and Vijender Singh Beniwal
8. Vivek Kaushik
9. Desh Deepak Singh

Speakers

10. Dr. Abhay Singh
11. Dr. Ngoru Nixon
12. Priyanka Jha
13. Dr. Krishna Murari

14. Dr. Vichitra Gupta
15. Renu Keer
16. Alia Zaman
17. Ritambhara Malviya
18. Pervez Majeed Lone

Valedictory Address

Prof. Yogendra Yadav

Chaired by Prof. Ujjwal Singh

Governance is all about listening to people…

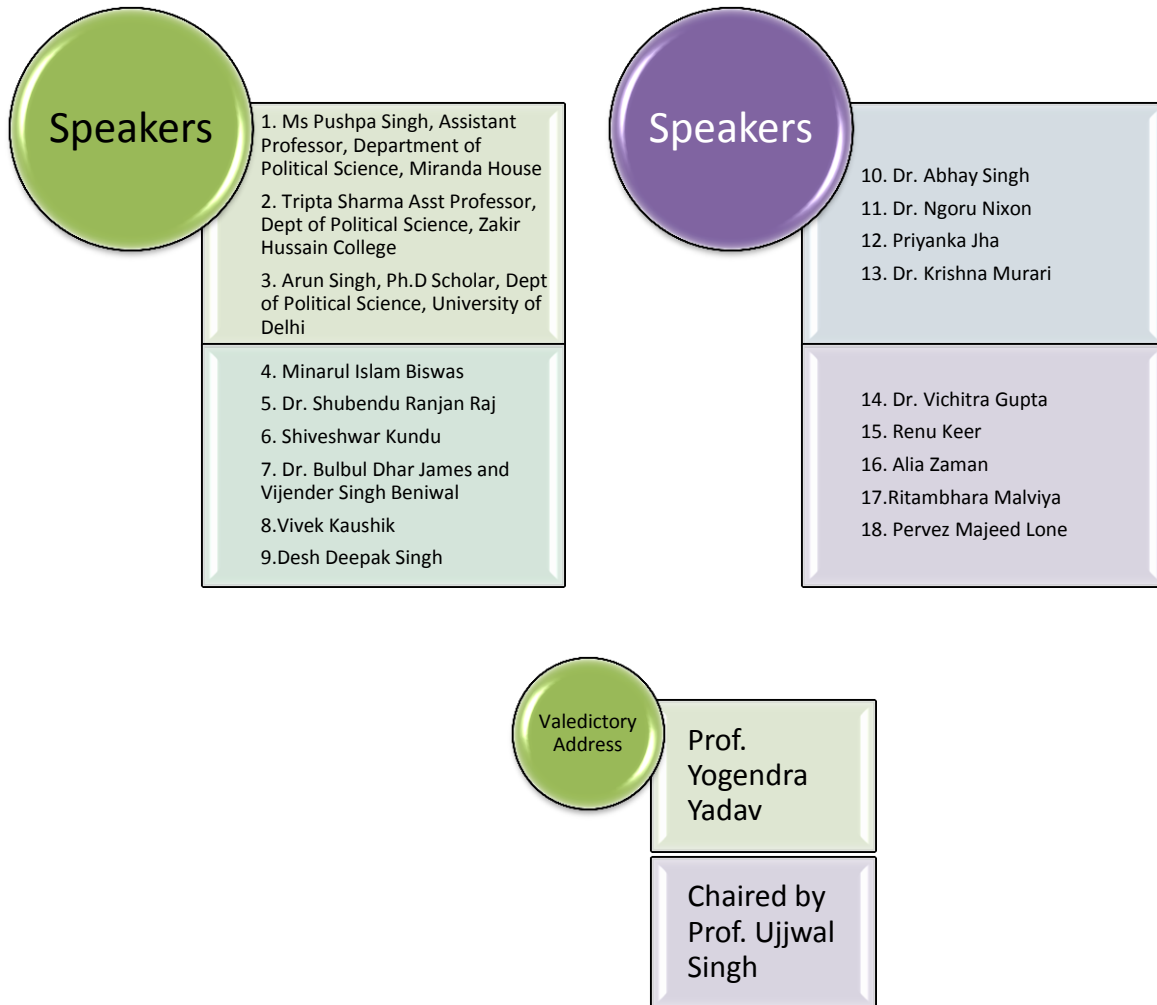A Special Lecture on *Ethics and Governance in Indian Politics* by the Minister for Commerce and Industry Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman was held as a part of the UGC sponsored National Seminar on 'Language, Ethics and Governance - Decoding Logic, Argumentation and Rhetoric in Indian Politics' on 25 January 2017 at the Department of Political Science, Miranda House.

Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman asked students to develop the habit of listening to others' opinions and views. Addressing the students on Rhetoric in the context of governance, she said that Good Governance rests on the ability of legislators to listen to the people. "*Rhetoric provides the flesh and blood for argumentation*" said Smt. Sitharaman focusing on the need to recognise the multiplicity of languages in our nation and the richness of metaphor and rhetoric contained in these languages. She then went on to explain what language does to an argument and how it builds a concrete framework through which ideas are conveyed. She elaborated using everyday examples and described how 'language' has the potential to persuade and influence the masses.

She also pointed out how governance, like justice has three components: to be done, to be seen to be done and to be done on time. There was an emphasis on governance and development made inclusive through patient and dedicated effort. Clarifying that there is a need to see 'good' in terms of ethics, she also agreed to the fact that ethics have become very relative, as opposed to ethics in their absolute terms.

Emphasising on the need for ethical governance, Smt. Sitharaman delved back into India's past to point out that no king in India, irrespective of religion, could keep ethics out of governance and the ones who did try to do so, were inevitably rejected by the people. This was so because people valued the goodness in governance and thus governance was seen as being "acceptable and inclusive". She looked at the contrast between administration in some parties in power and clarified that one must not look at it as passive governance, but as different forms of governance While speaking about the art of listening, she also spoke about how to build an argument through Tarka Shastra which is the rich tradition of Indian culture. Building an argument, she explained, comes through the process of elimination, cultural search for an idiom which can fit, engagement in rhetoric, and most importantly, patient listening. In essence thus, argument does not remain an act of one countering the other, but one building on the other. Overall, the lecture beautifully encapsulated the essence of rhetoric and language in politics.

Compiled by: **Chandni Jain & Ishani Banerjee, B.A. (H) Political Science III Year**

Professor Madhulika Banerjee
Department of Political Science, University of Delhi,
'Policy, Governance & Citizenship: Structuring a truly Democratic Relationship'

Department of Political Science, Miranda House, organized the inaugural lecture of Ecclesia 2017 on the topic 'Policy, Governance & Citizenship: Structuring a truly Democratic Relationship' delivered by Professor Madhulika Banerjee on February 16, 2017. The speaker emphasized the necessity to delineate the interconnections amongst the concept of policy, governance and citizenship in order to fully comprehend the dynamics of democracy in our country. Generally, these concepts have been treated as isolated boxes which become self-limiting. By the end of Prof. Banerjee's lecture, we students realized how deeply connected these values are! While drawing the interconnection among these concepts is important, equally significant is to redefine them with changing context and time. Therefore, it is imperative to traverse beyond the formalistic understanding of citizenship as laid out by T. H. Marshall. As we are situated in an inherently in egalitarian matrix, the procedural notion of citizenship alone cannot ensure equality. Hence, the the policies and the process of governance must take into account these hierarchies and asymmetrical power relation that govern our society.

We all are located in the structures of power and are also participant in it. As citizens, we should be able to disrupt oppressive structures and institutions to bring in new ideas, reflections, interventions thereby constantly contesting and negotiating to broaden the contours of the democracy. In order to bring everyone in the ambit of public policy, there is need to expand the understanding of the 'political'. The policies have to be inclusive of all components of the society engaging everyone. Exclusion leads to alienation and injustice in the society. The process of governance must keep it self-abreast of all these realities and respond sensitively addressing all these groups in society. The policies must be able to capture the lived realities of communities like the weavers, potters, blacksmith and all those who produce beautiful work with their hands. Unfortunately, our governance framework completely lacks such nuanced approach. Since the age of mass production associated with capitalism, human beings have become dismissive of work by hand. In context of India, we must raise question that why it is so that the people who produce wonderful things by hand happen to belong to the so called lower caste? Why is it that those who take away the dirt and pollution of the society are considered polluted? The caste hierarchy gets entangled with power structure that mediated our all realm of existence. This is where the role of modern system of knowledge comes into play and we must problematize it. We must understand the larger implications of such stances of modernity. Have we ever assessed the huge cost that the mass production in industries impinge on environment? On the other hand, these workers who work by hand utilize meagre rescues and cater to the society and thus are more sustainable. The current paradigm of development across the world and in India is completely blind to the devastation that we are causing to our environment and ecology the speaker also cited example of 'Make in India'- the flagship programme of the current government, explaining that we must not imitate the west unmindfully. Production on mass scale disrobes the environment and here Gandhian philosophy becomes very relevant. There must be some sense of self- imposed limitation on how much we can consume as we all inhabit one planet with limited resource. We must not repeat their mistake and should be wiser in our programmes and policies. It is interesting to note that there has been a range of institutions dealing with governance of society and policy formulation exiting in our country much before the arrival of the modern institution of the West. One such example is the governing of commons, for example common land for cattle grazing that rests on the shared understanding of the communities involved. Looking inwards help us find lasting solution of problems as we have many informal institutions and arrangements that govern the society. She concluded by stressing that the aim of democracy is equality, healthy life and sustainable living for all, hence must constantly create better alternatives and move towards that.

Compiled by **Deepti Sharma, B.A. (H) Political Science III Year**

Dr. Bijayalaxmi Nanda
Associate Professor of Political Science

Testimony

> *How is Nehru's Secularism introduced in India?*
>
> *How do young people make sense of something that happened more than half a century back?*
>
> *My daughter when she was class 11ᵗʰ showed me a note prepared by her teacher that had been distributed to them titled "Essays on Nehru's Secularism". It was in the form of a neat package with two sets of reasons categorised as Ethical and Prudential for Nehru propagating the principle of secularism in India.*

For purpose of academic rigour, I will complicate this simple story in order to arrive perhaps at the same conclusion.

In this paper, I strive to present an understanding of Nehru's secularism in the context of feeling its absence and its presence with the depth of feeling that we associate with love.

I take this from Martha Nussbaum who says that "Justice is hard. It demands our devotion as well as our understanding. For that reason, it must grip our emotions".

The paper will strive to capture four moments in the story of secularism that unfolds with Nehru.

1. The challenge of secularism,
2. The creativity of secularism,
3. Constitutionalism and secularism, and
4. Contradictions and contestations.

1. The challenge of secularism

As Rajeev Bhargava aptly puts it, "secularism is a beleaguered doctrine in India". My question is, Was Nehru aware of the intrinsic and inherent challenge of secularism when he made it the centre-piece of a fractured nation?

His exposition of secularism is best depicted in his own words: "We call our state a secular one. The word secular is not a very happy one. And yet for want of a better word, we have used it".

To Nehru religion was the fountainhead of authoritarianism and the method used at all times to secure the submission of the oppressed. But getting rid of religion altogether was a long-term objective: immediate problem was dealing with the growing communal animosity. Nehru was clear-sighted about the reasons for it. The social disharmony among Hindus and Muslims had spread to other spheres with the regional imbalance in development under the East India Company, leading to the classes who gained mostly from British rule being predominantly Hindu. So, by the time the interior areas of India caught up, national awareness expressed itself increasingly in a Hindu idiom. The process of diversion between religious communities was further aggravated by the official policy symbolised by the establishment of separate electorates. And as the franchise was broadened periodically on this basis the communal elements grew stronger. Nehru thus felt that the communal problem was a wasteful diversion from the main campaign against the British and that the communal parties who derived their support from the feudal and upper classes pandering to the myth and passion of the British in order to secure a base among the people. So, to Nehru these communal parties would disappear once the British left. In a jibe at him, his most honest biographer S. Gopal says, "In accordance with his favourite strategy of indirect approach, he ignored the

communal problem and concentrated his energy on the national movement against foreign rule and on the need to give the movement an economic slant" (Gopal, 1988, EPW). However, by 1933 Nehru conceded that it was understandable that the Muslims as an economically and educationally backward community might be apprehensive about the future. "Honest communalism is fear: false communalism is political reaction". Nehru had also written as far back as 1936, "The day on which India achieves her freedom, communal differences and jealousies will get solved of themselves". Far from being this the case, in August 1947 such difference assumed national and even international proportions. To be fair to Nehru, the British govt. gave no chance to him to translate many of his ideas on religious toleration, safeguarding of culture and languages, emphasis on political independence and economic betterment into practice. A dissolution of the communal problem was difficult in the colonial setting. Nehru had inherited a fractured nation. 1947 had intensified the communal mood and many senior leaders in India had suggested that secularism was a western concept, unsuited to India where a large majority practiced Hinduism as a social religion.

2. The creativity of Nehru's secularism

To counter his detractors, Nehru had long before independence defined secularism not according to any dictionary or historical tradition, but that which was adapted to conditions in this country. The future Indian state would not be hostile to religion but would not represent any one religion and would provide freedom of conscience to all. His buoyant optimism in the face of a ruptured, fragmented, bursting at its seams Nation- State is clear when he says, "What exactly does it mean? It does not obviously mean a state where religion is discouraged. It means freedom of religion and conscience including freedom for those who have no religion, subject only to their not interfering with each other or with the basic conceptions of our state. The word secular, however, conveys something much more to me, although that might not be its dictionary meaning. It conveys the idea of social and political equality. Thus, a caste-ridden society is not properly secular. I have no desire to interfere with any persons' belief but when those beliefs become petrified in caste divisions, undoubtedly, they affect the social structure of the state. They prevent us from realising the idea of equality which we claim to place before ourselves". (Nehru, 1963)

For Nehru, the concept of secular state carried three meanings:

1. Freedom of religion or irreligion for all;

2. The State will honour all faiths equally; and

3. The State shall not be attached to one faith or religion which by that act becomes the State religion.

The creed of secularism therefore according to Chandoke, discouraged fears that one group had the right to stamp the body politic, with its ethos even if it is in a majority. In effect, the meaning the secularism acquired in the Indian context added one more dimension to the generic concept of secularism: not only the recognition of faith, but equal treatment of all faiths (Chandoke, 2011).

So, Nehru evolved a design of promoting secularism through social transformation (eradicating inequality) and development (eradicating backwardness). His preferred notion of secularism was ***dharma nirpekshata***. However, with the constant communal riots, Nehru's understanding of secularism came much closer to the notion of ***sarva dharma sambhawa***.

Nehru's agnosticism and scientific temper could not but make him a non-religious man. For him secularism was not only a political doctrine but a social one with a revolutionary character. "I am not wedded to any dogma or religion, but I do believe, whether one calls it religion or not, in the innate spirituality of human beings. I do believe in the innate dignity of the individuals". As **Khilnani** says, Nehru in command of the Indian state was the link between the ideas of Tagore and Gandhi and their translation into State practice. He had to devise a nationalism particular to India

that would also be compatible with the exigencies of the modern (and very un-Indian State). No Indian intellectual understood more clearly the potentiality of nationalism in India. He saw at once its power to unite the country and its power to endanger it. Both internally and externally, he used a romanticised version of India's past to create an enabling fiction. Many wanted India to become Pakistan's mirror. Yet, a combination of political skills and chance events, such as death of Gandhi at the hand of a Hindu nationalist, and death of Patel a sympathiser of Hindu cause, made it possible for Nehru to temper this mirroring ambition. There were many intellectual and theoretical challenges, but Nehru's alternative conception - multiculturalism as you can call it now, was a radically unusual way to envisage the construction of a new State.

3.   Constitutionalism and secularism

The Constitution did not declare India specifically as a secular state until the 42nd Amendment. Till then its secularism had to be inferred in terms of Articles 25 and 26 which form the core of religious liberty in India Article 25 guarantees freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion, subject to public order, morality and health. Article 26 guarantees freedom to manage religious affairs subject to public order, morality and health. Articles 15, 16, 27 to 32, 325, 330 and 332 are also in a way relevant to the concept of secularism in India.

To Mark Gallantar, the Constitution of India is openly and determinately secular. To Justice Gajendra Gadkar, "the spirit of secularism permeates all the material provisions of the Constitution". Rajeev Bhargava also agrees that even by accepting community specific rights for religious minorities, the Constitution does not depart from secular principles. If one tries to understand Nehru's philosophy, it is clear that his commitment to constitutionalism was unquestionably modern. His commitment was to the idea of the constitution, the autonomy of the court, and the procedure of parliamentary debate. There was a telling incident early in the procedures of the constituent assembly, when a Congress parliamentarian entered the well and started shouting at the president of the Assembly. It was Nehru who got up and persuaded the errant member to return to his seat and maintain the discipline of the house. Afterwards Nehru told him that this is not a public meeting in Jhansi that you should address bhaio and behno and start lecturing at the top of your voice. So, he was in fact as Guha puts it, "a national constitutionalist". Nehru's secularism was in harmony with his constitutionalism. As Rajshekhara puts it, "The statement of secularity as part of the Constitution and the ensuing discourse as part of the official culture of post-independence India is therapeutic and cathartic. Some of India's most perspicacious leaders - probably Mr. Nehru himself among them - knew that there had never been such a thing as a secular tradition in India."

4.   Contradictions and contestations

Critiques: Gopal says: "Pressure of circumstances led Nehru not to throw his full weight on the side of secularism. In 1948 he committed the support of the government to the banning of communal political parties but did not implement the resolution. He agreed with Gandhi that the compulsory stoppage of cow-slaughter, taken as an isolated decision, would appear as a concession to Hindu bigotry and was therefore to be avoided; yet he did not oppose the listing of the banning of cow-slaughter as one of the directive principles of state policy in the constitution and was content to see that nothing came of it in practice. An even greater deficiency in his policy of merging religious communities in a general citizenship was the restriction of the insistence on monogamy to Hindu men and the grant of the rights of divorce and inheritance only to Hindu women. In his keenness to win the confidence of the Muslim community, he failed to ensure the equality before the law of all Indians and enact a common civil code. Religion can be separated from politics more easily if it is also separated from law".

Nandy argues that, while secularism provides us with an impoverished public sphere devoid of any substantive system of meaning, the entry of religious identities into the public sphere impoverishes religion because the religion is subordinated to political pursuits. As a critique of modernity, he believes that the alternative is the recovery of the tradition of tolerance, which exists in and through unarticulated but lived faiths. T.N. Madan cites three reasons for believing that secularism in South Asia as a shared credo of life is impossible, as basis of state action impracticable and a blueprint for the foreseeable future impotent – (1) Majority of people are active adherent of some religious faith, (2) Buddhism and Islam have been declared as State religion and (3) secularism is incapable of countering religious fundamentalism. These critiques of secularism have also been challenged. Akheel Bilgrami accused Nandy of practicing both nostalgia and skewed historiography. And Achin Vanaik suggests that it celebrates an embedded self rather than a free equal individuated person. Bilgrami believes that Nehruvian socialism's main problem was that it did not emerge as a product of a dialogue between religious communities. It was adopted from an Archimedean point. And it is precisely this that makes it unsustainable.

In lieu of a conclusion:

While it is clear that there are many problems with Nehruvian secularism, a contemporary mapping of communal violence and State communalism also reveal that the political parties may have failed Nehru's idea of secularism, more than Nehru's ideas failing them.

Nehru's secularism was a practical necessity in India at the point of its inception. Instances like Justice Verma endorsing in the famous 1996 judgement that Hindutva represented a way of life and thus not violative of secularism, wilful ignorance of Amnesty International's 2008 report, justice eluding victims in Gujarat, the complicity of the State in 1984 in the genocidal attack on Sikh minority, the inactivity of the State in 1992 Babri Masjid demolition and the Shah Bano case judgement- bring in the problems of justifying State intervention in religion and squaring secularism with minority rights in the secular project. Partho Chatterjee feels that the Hindu right is not threatened by secularism and the norm of toleration needs to be established. Bhargava talks about contextual secularism. (He talks about hyper-substantive secularism, ultra-procedural secularism and his own contextual secularism – equal dignity for all, differentiated citizenship rights).

Amartya Sen talks about recognising of heterogeneity and plurality in Indian society and has asked for symmetric political treatment. Many of these ideas are posed as distinct from Nehru.

However, Nehru was himself aware of some of these issues and his secularism included many of these principles and he did, as any liberal, reconsider his own position. "I must confess to you" he wrote to Jinnah after some talks with him soon after the outbreak of war, "that in this matter I have lost confidence in myself, though I am not usually given that way. But the last two or three years have had a powerful effect on me. My own mind moves on a different plane and most of my interests lie in other directions. And so, though I have given much thought to the problem and understand most of its implications, I feel as if I was an outsider and alien in spirit." As Gopal puts it succinctly 'But if he did not come up with appropriate and effective actions in different contexts, he at least left us with the right answers and the correct approaches.'

Dr. Namrata Singh
Assistant Professor of Political Science

> *In the new millennium, nations are judged by the well-being of their people; by levels of health, nutrition and education; by the civil and political liberties enjoyed by their citizens; by the protection guaranteed to children and provision made for the vulnerable and the disadvantaged. The vast numbers of the people of India can be its greatest asset if they are provided with the means to lead healthy and economically productive lives.*
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> -National Population Policy. (2000)

Population creates two kinds of conflicts within the society- conflict for resources and conflict of choice. Both these conflicts and their management are essential to create a dynamic and sustainable democratic process. Human development, guided by the simple idea that 'people always come first', has moved to the centre of the global development debate. This concept of human development largely developed by UNDP is being incorporated in the development strategy of the world. Now it is in the core of the UN's International Development Strategy. The real objective of development is to increase people's choices. Income is one aspect of these choices – and an extremely important one but it is not the sum total of human existence. Health, education, a good physical environment and freedom are also important. [1]

At the core of all these choices comes the magnitude of population that affects the quality of choice and distribution of resources. However, one needs to understand that this definition of human development was not developed in a decade. Over the last half century there have been many changes in the thinking on population issues.

From the first population conference held in 1954 till about four decades, the population debate focussed on control and demography. It was the Cairo Conference, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), 1994 which fixated on the need to reconceptualise population issues based on the integration and interdependence of three variables: population, development, and the environment. The ICPD emphasized the need both to reformulate those population policies most concerned with the demographic dimension of population changes and to adopt suitable macroeconomic and socioeconomic policies that would promote sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development in all countries. It became clear that population was no longer about numbers, figures and statistics but about people and improving their quality of life. It was also agreed that no method-specific targets be imposed from above, no force, no coercion, no incentives and disincentives are required, because incentives and disincentives are either coercive or ultimately tend to be coercive and are in fact counterproductive. Coercion infringes upon human rights and inhibits human development. The ICPD Programme of Action (PoA) placed "individuals" in the centre of development with a focus on building pillars of "Human Development, Human Rights", Gender Equity and Equality.

Explicit concern over **India's** rapid rise of population originated in the third decade of this century. For the first time since the initiation of a systematic population Census in 1881, India's population increased slightly more than 10 percent (or 27.7 million) in a decade, with the 1931 census enumerating a population of 279.0 million (Census of India, paper I of 1951). After independence one of the direct outcomes and fallouts of the international and U.S. policy and strategy in the 1950s and '60s in India was the system of "family planning targets" initiated in 1966. A slow phase-by-phase introduction of a "clinical" approach (with equal reliance on conventional and natural methods, particularly for woman) and an aggressive method-specific targeting and new

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[1]   Nanda, A.R. and Nihal, *Introduction to population*, Population and Sustainable Development, IGNOU

invasive method for women (like IUD) were taken up.[2] To quote Hollan (2003): "The implementation of these policies was a response to increasing pressure by international (lending/donor) organizations (World Bank, USAID and Ford Foundation) to step up population control programs as a condition for economic development."

But during the Emergency, the family planning received a setback in India due to the rigid implementation of target based approach. However, post Cairo, it became clear that population was no longer about numbers, fingers and statistics but about people and their quality of life. It was also agreed that no force, no coercion, no incentives and disincentives were required. India's commitment to ICPD principles and recommendations of the PoA was affirmed when India – a signatory to the Cairo Declaration released its National Population Policy (NPP) in 2000. The NPP begins with a statement that 'the overriding objective of economic and social development is to improve the quality of lives that people lead, to enhance their well-being, and to provide them with opportunities and choices to become productive assets in society'.

NPP in tandem with ICPD did not stress on Total fertility rate (TFR) and CPR (contraceptive prevalence rate) rather the focus became broader and holistic and different in nature. The NPP is gender sensitive and incorporates a holistic approach to health and education needs of women, adolescents and the girl child. It states that 'stabilizing population is not merely a question of making reproductive health services accessible and affordable, but also increasing the coverage and outreach of primary and secondary education, extending basic amenities like sanitation, safe drinking water and housing, empowering women with enhanced access of education and employment'. The four core themes that drive the NPP are addressing unmet needs, decentralization and convergence in implementation with all other relevant social sectors, commitments from and collaboration with the NGO sector (PPP: public-private partnership) to augment the pool of diverse health care providers and mainstreaming the Indian system of medicines.

In spite of the ICPD agenda and the adoption of NPP, which have made a radical departure from the old approach, the population debate in India remains constrained by fears of a population explosion. Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) programme approach, 1997 and NPP, 2000 did open a new vista different from the 'target free approach'. However, it failed to open up the minds of exponents and supporters of 'population control' and 'top-down targets'. Example of one such conflict is Small Family vs. Two Child Norm. The introduction of this norm has a double-edged implication. The findings of a field study across five states where the two-child qualification norm has been implemented in local bodies reveals the dichotomy that exists at higher policy-making levels where this measure is seen as conducive and exemplary in view of the need to raise small families while at grass root levels the perception is widespread that the norm is coercive in its impact.[3] The two child norm has the potential to cause immense harm to women's health in the existing social situation where son's preference is high and women's status is low.

Thus, curbing population growth cannot be a goal in itself. It is only a means to development. If development can help in stabilising the population, truly that is a much better and superior solution to one where population growth is curbed in the hope that development will automatically follow. Therefore, improvement of health and nutrition, on the other hand, can be an end itself and will lead to population stabilization. Surely this a better approach. It is high time, that we stop counting people and instead start counting on people.

"Take care of the people and population will take care of itself."[4]

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[2] Bhan,Gautam and Panda ,Pradeep, *Revisiting India's Population Policies* , Oxford Handbook of Population and Development, 2010

[3] The study on "Panchayati Raj and Two Child Norm:Implications and Consequences" was taken up by Mahila Chetna Manch in the states of A.P.,Haryana,M.P.,Orissa and Rajasthan.

[4] Advocacy papers on Population Issues, Population Foundation of India, 2010, p.139.

Citizenship and Governance: The Feminist and Subaltern Critique

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From the times of Greek antiquities to the modern world, the concept of citizenship remains pivotal to all political discourses. Citizenship is as old as the settled human community.[1] As a concept, it signifies membership in a particular political community. This membership confers a status to individuals ensuring certain set of benefits including rights and entitlements. It determines who is a legitimate member of a particular state and who is not. In that sense, it also provides common identity to its people in terms of their belongingness to a specific nation. Citizenship refers to the condition of civic equality that secures equal rights to the enjoyment of the collective goods provided by the political association.[2] Citizenship has also been referred as the momentum concept by John Hoffman as it marks a new beginning, newer realities and changing dynamics in all societies.[3] Derek Heater believes that the extension of citizenship from eighteen century has initiated mass equalization as a great proportion of world's population are treated equally before the law, have rifts to participate fully in the political arena and enjoy state provided welfare.[4]

However, the way it has been engaged and addressed in the discourse of Governance and Public policy, the project of citizenship appears less than egalitarian! Interestingly, it has been questioned and contested from many positions like feminist, subaltern, communitarian, multicultural and so on. Under this light, we may call it as 'essentially contested concept' to use the phrase of W. B. Gally as there is nothing that appears settled about it. In this way, the idea of citizenship, the way it has operated with glaring omissions and commissions, poses one of the greatest dilemma for modern day democracies. On one hand, citizenship exude emancipatory potential and symbolizes equality, on the other hand it also acts as a closure for many as it determines who will be the constituting members of that society. Therefore, it is mandatory to raise some uncomfortable questions and deconstruct the foundational assumptions about such notions.

Feminist and Subaltern understanding presents some of the critical perspectives that explore this gendered and exclusionary trait of citizenship. They challenge monolithic assumptions of liberal notion of citizenship and the set of formal rights that are attached to it. Citizenship serves as a tool of inclusion and exclusion; for it defines who are, and who not members of the political society. It becomes a terrain of conflict and struggle, where a multitude of social and political forces and ideological formulations exist in unequal and often conflicting relationships.[5] This asymmetry of power of androcentric world also pervades the political discourse of policy making and governance where women and women related issues are deliberately marginalised or treated as trivial.

The feminist and subaltern critique of citizenship expose the myth of women, Dalits, adivasis and other marginalised sections as free and equal citizens. [6] The domain of citizenship has been identified as subject of the male bastion. The dominant practiced of citizenship is informed by patriarchal constructs, societal prejudices, cultural practices and traditions which enables male domination and privileges. This is quite evident in the fact that societies took so long to extend the suffrage rights to the women citizens even though men have been enjoying the same from long time. Mary Wollstonecraft has famously criticised and questioned this discriminatory attitude towards women in her work *Vindication of Rights of Women* (1792).

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[1]   Barbalet J .M. *Citizenship*, World View, 1997 (First Indian Reprint), p.1.
[2]   Bellamy Richard, (2008) *Citizenship: A Very Short Introduction* Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, p. 17.
[3]   Hoffman, John and Paul Graham, (2015) *Introduction to Political Theory*, (Third Edition), Routledge, London and New York, p.137.
[4]   Heater Derek, (1999)*What is Citizenship*, Polity, Press, Cambridge, Maiden, USA., p. 84.
[5]   Roy Anupama, (2005) *Gendered Citizenship: Historical and Conceptual Explorations*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2005. P.2.
[6]   For detailed discussion on feminism and citizenship, refer to Anupama Roy, *Gendered Citizenship: Historical and Conceptual Explorations*, Orient Longman, Delhi, 2005.

She questioned that how the legacies of enlightenment were associated with men only and why they do not apply to the rest half of the humanity. Does that imply that women are lesser kind of human beings? Wollstonecraft fiercely advocated for equal civil and political rights of women. Similarly, Olympe de Gouges emphatically advocated for women's rights, thus bringing this issue to the forefront in both England and France. J. S. Mill along with Harriet Taylor also pleaded strongly for equality of sexes in their historical text *The Subjection of Women* (1869). In the recent times, Carole Patemen, Susan Moller Okin has strongly pleaded for equal rights of women in the political discourse. Judith Squires in her book Gender in Political Theory (1999) have shown that how different political theorists have been deliberately dismissive of the question of women in the history of political thought. Different canonical texts by Aristotle to Rousseau to Marx have either have been dismissive of women or never thought women as independent citizens to be factored in their analyses.

From the beginning of human civilisation, unfortunately, the societies have always managed to exclude women, slaves, and colonised people from corridors of political power by justifying it on various fallacious grounds. Some of such ridiculous arguments have been lesser faculty of reason and rationality, subordinate mental and physical capacity, lack of understanding of the working of the political and public activities etc. These are some ploys that were used to deprive the subaltern sections from entitlement of citizenship rights. Nonetheless, these groups have been able to emancipate themselves by their resolute struggles. The persistent feminist struggles for equality and empowerment in all parts of the world have also transformed the concept of citizenship, making it equal and more inclusive than before.

Historically, many societies have not been egalitarian as they have been hierarchically constituted in terms of class, gender, race, ethnicity and caste. The context of post-colonial/developing societies are typically marked by such inequalities that results in the differing status of citizens. As result of such hierarchy, people do not have equal access to resources and opportunities. Those who are vulnerable and at the margins are denied access to citizenship rights. There lies the limitation of the formal view of citizenship, as it is unable to factor in the disadvantages of certain groups who have not been part of the mainstream and are not capable of experiencing their rights like others. For example, in case of India, Dalits and adivasis have been deprived of the benefits of the mainstream in the past. The sphere of civil society in India is full of indignities aimed at dalits.[7] As the caste system has been deeply entrenched in the societal structures, dalits have always been discriminated against. They have not been given their just claims. Social justice has been denied to them and in order to correct these aberrations, the policy of affirmative action has been brought in action.

In most of the societies, citizenship has failed to deliver women and subaltern sections their due claims. The paradox is that it implies equal status and worth of all citizens, yet remarkable part of the population is deprived of its substantive benefits. It has emancipatory potential by virtue of its rights and immunities, yet it fails to ameliorate the denigrating living of historically deprived sections. Unless this ambiguity is completely rectified, the concept of citizenship as a universal liberator will be nothing more than rhetoric. The modern notion of citizenship has to reconfigure itself in order to become more inclusive to enable equitable and just representation of all without any discrimination. A healthy society cannot be created unless every member enjoys equality in real terms. Democratic extension of citizenship to all members of the political community will ensure holistic development well-being and amity.

Citizenship encompasses the relationship between the citizens and the state, between citizens and various associations and organizations within the state, the relationship among citizens, in which every category conditions and in turn gets conditioned by the rest. There is a constant dialogue among all these, which shapes the governance process. When a society ceases to conduct, and continue this dialogue, the state

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[7]   Guru Gopal (2005) "Citizenship in Exile: a Dalit Case" in *Civil Society, Public Sphere and Citizenship* (eds). Bhargava Rajeev and Reifeld, Helmut, Sage, New Delhi.

becomes authoritarian and gradually starts decaying. To make governance democratic and inclusive, public policies must take into account the narratives that emerge from such engagements. Policies must be framed keeping disadvantages of these sections in mind.

However, policies also have to evolve gradually with changing time and context of citizenship. They have to creatively engage and respond to the newer dynamics of the society. Example of one such initiative has been the continuous updation of approach to women's economic empowerment. In order to bring women in the economic and political mainstream approaches like Women in Development(WID), Woman and Development (WAD) and Gender and Development (GAD) continuously evaluated the variables and determinants governing women's lives and redefined their approach and orientation accordingly. They emphasised newer tools and techniques to materialise empowerment of women. In 1990s, there was stress on gender sensitisation of public policies. Through process of Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Auditing procedures and mechanisms were set up with in government organisations to take account of gender issues at all stages of policy making, programme designing and implementation.[8] Such efforts brought visible changes in the realm of public sphere for women. Citizenship has to venture beyond its formal connotation and constantly negotiate with the institutions and structures of power like patriarchy, caste system, class divisions to redefine and reposition itself. In terms of policy, the governmental projects must be able to accrue and deliver benefits to all sections, particularly the vulnerable ones like women, dalits and adivasis, who at present, do not find much footage in the larger development discourse. The goal of citizenship must be inclusive and emancipatory, not divisive and controlling.

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[8] Priyam Manisha, Menon Krishna and Banerjee Madhulika (2009) *Human Rights, Gender and the Environment* Pierson, Delhi.

Guilty till Proved Innocent!

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Do you carry a book by Karl Marx? Do you question decisions by government of the day? Do you question what is happening in Kashmir? Do you question capital punishment? Do you question atrocities committed by the armed forces on civilians? Well then there is every possibility that you can be imprisoned for life under the charges of sedition.

Under Section 124A of Indian Penal Code (IPC) sedition means whoever, by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law in India, shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added, or with imprisonment which may extend to three years, to which fine may be added, or with fine. The expression "disaffection" includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity. But is all voice of dissent means disloyalty and enmity? Who will define disloyalty and enmity? It has been deliberately kept vague so as to include any action/words/symbols which government of the day feels abrupt can be boxed under sedition. In subsequent judicial judgments, it has been made clear that comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, does not constitute an offence under this section. It also highlighted the fact that comments expressing disapprobation of the administrative or other action of the Government without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section. These judgments can be read as an indication that in a democracy space for dissent is crucial. Therefore, all voices of difference cannot be stifled under the garb of sedition. When dissent is expressed through lawful means is not an act of sedition. But who will define what is lawful? It has given power for interpretation at the hands of state agencies like police and court which delivers its judgment in a contextual basis. The decision of the Supreme Court in the case of Kedar Nath Singh v. State of Bihar (supra), 1962, has categorically held that it is well settled that the words, deeds or writings constitute sedition punishable under section 124A only if they incite violence or disturb law and order or create public disorder or have the intention or tendency to do so. Even in this judgment there is a loophole. Intention to disrupt public order is speculative and subjective in nature.

Agencies of the state can claim most of the actions as having intention to disrupt public order. Is public order sacrosanct? Who defines public? As per NCRB figures for the year 2014, a total of 58 people were arrested in connection with sedition cases, but the government managed only one conviction. Meanwhile, individuals charged with sedition have to live without their passport, are barred from government jobs and must produce themselves in court at all times as and when required. A person who is charged also has to spend money on legal fees. The charges have rarely stuck in most of the cases, but the process itself becomes the punishment. Until one is proved innocent, one is counted as guilty. This section of IPC is a political tool. Its definition is vague to the extent that anybody who raises a voice challenging the decisions of government of the day can be charged with sedition. For example, when Arundhati Roy raised questions on military occupation of Kashmir, she was charged with sedition. When Binayak Sen challenged, atrocities committed by armed forces on Adivasis in the state of Chhattisgarh, he was charged with sedition. When Aseem Trivedi made political cartoons highlighting corruption by politicians, he was charged with sedition, when Kanhaiya Kumar, Umar Khalid and Anirban Bhattacharya, students in Jawaharlal Nehru University questioned hanging of Afzal Guru, they were charged with sedition. Is government of the day infallible in all these instances? If you are raising questions on policies and decisions of government, how you are automatically becoming enemy of the state? Beyond and between binary of agreement

and disagreement with the state, there are many voices and views of the citizens. All these voices are equally important in a democracy. For instance, somebody might be questioning hanging of Afzal Guru on the ground that the person opposes the whole idea of capital punishment per se, not taking into account to whom it is done. Someone else might be opposing hanging of Afzal Guru for the manner it was implemented. All these questions are very important for the Indian state in future if it continues to claim being democratic. If these voices of dissent are crushed under sedition charges, then it means the Indian state is not confident about the truth it is projecting. If otherwise it will democratically answer these queries but not stifle it. The tools used in crushing voice of dissent as sedition is equally interesting. Various tools used in sedition charge are - on the presumption, not actual damage to public order, a person can be arrested; extra judicial confessions are used as evidence against the arrested person; possession of handbooks, publications or publication of hand book containing the view of any writer questioning the state is seen as anti-national and delay/refusal of grant of bail to the arrested person to facilitate proof of innocence. Through all these mechanisms, the arrested person is treated as a guilty before it is proved in any court of law.

For a democracy to sustain and survive, the critical voice is imperative. There should be open channels of communication between the government and the governed. These channels of communication should be open to all citizens irrespective of diversities in their political orientation, social, economic and cultural background. The democracy which demonizes its own citizens until they prove their innocence and unilaterally defend actions of the government, will sooner or later hit the mark of doom.

India and the Evolving Geopolitics of the Indo-Pacific

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A major discussion in the 21st century international affairs has been around the shifting economic and political centre of gravity to Asia, which for the past several centuries had revolved around the West. This in maritime realm translates into a shift in focus from the Euro-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific region, the area spanning from the Eastern Coast of Africa through the Indian Ocean up to the western and the Central Pacific Ocean. Oceans and seas are playing ever more significant role in the current globalised century as the maritime domain is one of the root enablers of globalization being the medium through which 90 percent of the world trade is transported. At such a point in history, the Indo-Pacific region, connecting the three continents of Africa, Asia, and Australia, including the energy-rich Middle East, the Indian Subcontinent, the growing economies of East Asia and Australia, plays a pivotal role in determining global economic prosperity and political stability.

The rise of Indo-pacific has been centred on:

• The Indian Ocean regaining its economic, political, strategic weight. The increasing interface between the Indian and the Pacific Ocean has resulted in a more integrated view of the two

• India's emergence as a major power and its aspiration of great power

• The intensive growth of East Asia, particularly China

The Indo-Pacific defines India's core area of interest. India by the virtue of its geographical location at the centre of the Indian Ocean, growing economy and maritime military capabilities, figure prominently in the maritime geopolitical setting of the Indo-Pacific. As India looks beyond the east of Malacca, for the first time, it is being considered as a maritime power beyond the Indian Ocean. The Indian Navy is being restructured to give it power projection capabilities far beyond the shores. The new framework of the Indo-Pacific is also completely in tune with changes in the India's Look East Policy. New Delhi is reinvigorating its traditional 'Look East' policy, to make it 'Act East'. The definition of 'east' has extended beyond the Southeast Asia, covering Australia to East Asia with focus on the significance of ASEAN and East Asia Summit (EAS). Therefore, the Indo-Pacific strategic arc is acquiring greater salience.

History shows that seas and navies of the major powers have played an important role in determining the global balance of power. Given the strategic geography of the region, flanked by some of the most dynamic regions of the world, enormous value natural resources, expanding market, and intractable territorial disputes naturally the Indo-Pacific is likely to become a major area of traditional security challenges such as great power competition and the rapidly changing balance of power, which will have significant implications for India.

Both major and middle powers, US and China, India, Japan, Australia, Indonesia, are vying up to secure greater access to the region's scarce resources as well as strategic sea-lanes. At present, the region is at an interesting historic epoch-witnessing the simultaneous rise of India and China which have historically been continental powers, but are now gearing up to emerge as major maritime powers, rise of ASEAN economies, enduring economic growth of Japan and continued presence of the US in the region.

The strategic environment in the region to a large extent will be determined by the interplays among the three principle actors: India, US and China. All the debates about the diminishing role of the US in the region had been put to rest by the Obama administration's policy of 'pivot' to Asia announced in 2011. A major factor in the US' rebalance towards Asia has been apprehensions about China's growing power and enthusiasm to strengthen partnership with India. However, the latest question is how the US' Asia policy will change under the new President Donald J. Trump. It is still very early to predict on that, uncertainty looms over the issue, particular in the light of Trump announcing US' withdrawal from the TPP (Trans-

Pacific Partnership). For India, one of the major concerns have been to observe its northern neighbour China's involvement in the region, in the light of developments like the earlier contested 'strings of pearls' strategy and recently the 'Maritime Silk Road' project. India, on its part, has been advancing its diplomatic ties all across the region. As for China, unlike most of the East Asian states China would be less willing to accept the US' dominant role in the region. China has also kept a cautious eye on India's self-assertion in region. Although both India and China deny any great power ambitions and insist that their rise will be peaceful, but as their navies began to operate far from their immediate waters, there is a possibility of a clash of interests in future. Besides, the region is also threatened by numerous non-traditional security challenges.

Indo-Pacific region is in the midst of historic power transition; characterized by the regional interplay between the China and India, Japan's efforts to maintain its pivotal role and the US' efforts to preserve its role in maintaining a strategic balance of power in the region. The present competitive environment in the Indo-Pacific region is likely to continue for foreseeable future. The Bay of Bengal, the Strait of Malacca, and the South China Sea that connects the two oceans, would be the focus maritime tensions.

However, all the countries in the region have a deep investment in the stability and prosperity of the region as their economic growth is highly dependent on the continued, uninterrupted trade via sea routes. The present international scenario dominated by globalisation and marked by intense economic interdependence among the countries are strong stabilising forces, which provides the necessary background for the states to develop a cooperative framework to achieve their common goals of security and economic prosperity. Indo-Pacific offers countries space for cooperation on many issues of common concern in a balanced and inclusive manner, ranging from coordinating responses to non-traditional security challenges, non-proliferation, counter-proliferation and disarmament, safeguards these global commons for the unhindered passage of trade.

Panchayats in Tribal Areas during Post-globalised Era: Issues, Challenges and Ways Forward

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The Panchayati Raj has been one of the most original and ancient systems of local self-governance in India, guaranteeing to the people the experience of direct democracy in recent times. Drawn on the vision of Mahatma Gandhi to give the historic experiment in direct self-governance to the rural masses, the system of Panchayati Raj finds an explicit reference in part IV of the Constitution under Article 40 which enjoins upon the government to ensure the organization of Panchayati Raj in the country in order to take governance down to the level of masses. In such situation Panchayati Raj assumes a very effective role in the political education of the rural folk. In 1992, a giant leap forward was achieved when 73th Constitutional Amendment was enacted, which gave Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj institutions. It provided for a uniform three-tier Panchayati Raj system at the village, block and district levels. Two new Schedules were added to the Constitution i.e 11th and 12th Schedule. The Act also transferred 29 subjects to the Panchayats and 18 subjects to the Municipalities. All the states were required to make changes in their respective acts in conformity with the 73rd amendment.

However, Schedules Areas were excluded from the 73rd Amendment Act. As per article 243 M (4) (2), Parliament may by law extend the provision of Panchayats to the Scheduled Areas, subject to such exemptions and modifications as may be specified in such a law. What most of the State did was that they framed Panchayat Laws for the entire state including the Scheduled Areas without taking into account the exemptions provided for article 243 M. The Parliament did not take effective measures to ensure that the Constitutional provision gets reflected in State Laws. Therefore, agitations were noticed in the tribal areas. Considering the discontent amongst tribals in different parts of the country, the Central Government constituted a committee in 1994 headed by Dilip Singh Bhuria to suggest salient features of the Panchayat law to be extended to Schedules Areas of the country. Bhuria Committee submitted its report in January 1995. It dealt with the issues of participatory Democracy, Effectiveness of Customary Laws, Community Control over Resources and Appropriate Administrative Frame Work for the Scheduled Areas. The committee felt that while sharing the new Panchayati Raj structure in tribal areas, it is desirable to blend the traditional with the modern by treating the traditional institutions as the foundation on which the modern super-structure should be built and taking cognizance of their indigenous institutions and ethos while considering democratic decentralization in tribal areas. On the basis of recommendations of Bhuria Committee, a bill was passed in the parliament on 24th December 1996. The Act is called provision of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) 1996 (Central Act No. 40). It is one of the revolutionary pieces of legislation that ensures restoration of power to tribal communities by providing them the rights over the natural resources and also by safeguarding their cultures, customs, traditions etc. The Gram Sabha has been made the soul of democratically decentralized administrative structure. It shall be competent to safeguard and preserve the traditions and customs of the people, their cultural identity, community resources and the customary mode of dispute resolution.

IMPLEMENTATION OF PESA

The advent of Globalization has added more miseries in the lives of the tribals. It is not merely a question of marginalization of tribals, it is also a multi-pronged attack on the very foundation of their existence and livelihood. The end of 'License Raj' heralds the beginning of a 'Patent Raj' with IPRs being framed as entitlements to usurp the bio-diversity which are the living resources of the tribals making them bondsmen of the corporates. The successive governments have been giving the corporate tax exemptions, loans, land, water, subsidies and other facilities at the expense of public taxes. Therefore, it is wrong to consider them as purely private entities. To my mind, they are really "public-aided private companies".

Ministry of Rural Development is the nodal agency for overseeing the implementation. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs constituted in 1999 is yet to be mandated with the responsibility of also monitoring the

implementation of PESA. There has been erstwhile Bhuria Committee report; 7th Report of 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission; 'Capacity Building for Conflict Resolution'; Mungekar Committee Report (2009) for improving the effectiveness of 5th and 6th schedule areas. Reviewing the implementation of PESA, a Planning Commission Working Group Report categorically states that:

> "All States have enacted requisite compliance legislations by amending the respective Panchayati Raj Acts. Certain gaps continue to exist. Most States are also yet to amend the subject laws and rules, such as those relating to money lending, forest, mining and excise to harmonise with PESA. Though the provisions in such laws are legally invalid after December 12, 1997, they continue to be followed by departments and their functionaries for want of clear instructions and guidelines. Powers statutorily devolved upon the Gram Sabha and Panchayats are not matched by the concomitant transfer of funds and functionaries resulting in the non-exercise of such powers. States have, over the years, been repeatedly urged to expedite this process, but progress has been slow and often, only symbolic, with no real intention to operationalise the provisions in spirit".

The latest attack on tribal rights is an interlocutory application filed by the Odisha government before the Supreme Court on February 25, 2016. The application has been moved by the state-run miner, Odisha Mining Corporation (OMC) challenging the landmark Vedanta mining judgment of the Supreme Court. The OMC claims the resolution of the *gram sabhas* rejecting mining in the Niyamgiri hills cannot remain perpetually in force and is seeking a constant review of the decision on the flimsy argument that some of the *gram sabha* members who had rejected mining in the hills have since passed away. It has also questioned the resolutions of the 12 *gram sabhas* of the Dongaria Kondh, Kutia Kandha and other tribal communities on the basis of technical errors committed during the passage of the resolutions rejecting mining. According the PESA, if land is to be acquired for development projects, then it is mandatory to obtain the consent of the concerned *gram sabhas*, who are responsible to prevent the alienation of land. The decisions of the *gram sabhas* have to be sacrosanct and should not be questioned. But the Odisha government is challenging this "authority" in a questionable and illogical move by approaching the SC. In its Samata judgement in 1997, the Supreme Court gave a clear message that if any state government allowed the transfer of land in favour of non-tribals and/or leased land in scheduled areas for mining projects, this would completely destroy the legal and constitutional fabric made to protect the tribal communities. Thus, the OMC's interlocutory application is all the more surprising, given the Samata judgement. The state government appears to say that members are more important than an institution (*gram sabha*s). If the decisions of the *gram-sabha*s are to be reviewed, this must be done by the *gram sabhas* themselves with no undue external pressure and interference.

Conclusion

Good Governance must include having first-hand knowledge of the tribal areas, their problems and providing quick and satisfactory redressal. With a view to ensure this, a cadre of officers and officials well trained in the values of tribal life and culture, having zeal and enthusiasm to work among them should be evolved. The Government needs to just adopt the 'Humanist and Pragmatic' approach while implementing the constitutional provisions guaranteed in the Constitution. Firstly, A Commission under article 339 to report on the administration of the Scheduled Areas and the welfare of the STs in States should be constituted immediately. Secondly, all reports of Governors as required under Article 244 be laid in the Parliament and referred to ST Parliamentary Committee; followed by Action Taken Report by the GOI. Thirdly, the Government needs to bring an amendment into the PESA, 1996 by incorporating the provision of 'Penal Offence' in case of non-compliance with the decision of tribals. Fourthly, they must demand that any land owned by them if affected by the development projects must be compensated by equal quality and quantity of land with fertility and irrigation facilities. Any retribution in the form of money should be at market prices or share capital of equal amount being given to the family to make them owners. This measure must be undertaken prior to the take of the actual project to avoid any displacement of the tribals. It is the positive duty of the State to realize the positive rights of the tribal people as enshrined in the Constitution of India. All Constitutional methods should be adopted by the State to ensure the implementation of the Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 so that 'equity' and 'Justice' could be established in the society.

Dr. Dhruv Pande
Assistant Professor of Political Science

This article outlines the relationship between the three concepts of women's participation, empowerment and food sovereignty. It seeks to show how these three concepts are inter-related through collective and organic farming practices by the marginalized women in rural hinterlands of the state of Tamil Nadu, India. It critically examines the nature and scope of the practices of collective and organic farming in the village communities, in rural Tamil Nadu. The recent trends in the globalization policies bring with them a number of activities and practices that are barely questioned due to their imposition and implementation through the neo-liberal hegemony. Subsequently, this affects the environment, especially in the developing countries. The article reflects upon the specific policies of globalization that need to be addressed in order to protect the natural habitat and ensure a basic minimum standard of living for the women of these communities.

It argues for alternative models of the rural agricultural economy. These models are based on local practices initiated by the local rural women. The demarcation of villages on caste lines gives rise to a need for a more equitable living and working conditions. Hence, the two sections of this paper highlight the close relation the women populace have with collective participation, empowerment and the construction of food sovereignty. The paper also highlights the strategies that the women undertake towards the protection and safeguarding of land as a natural resource from the imposition of neo-liberal globalization policies implemented through the state apparatus. The framework and guidelines of these practices bear an everyday dynamic in the light of new, innovative strategies and techniques used not only for safeguarding land but also for ensuring a sustainable livelihood with respect and dignity in the long run. Economic self-reliance brings with it self-governance and self-rule that results in self-dependence rather than dependence on external institutional factors which in any case often prove to be ineffective. The state government, however, of late has shown some signs of efficient functioning and regulating the mechanisms of rural agricultural economy.

The fieldwork for this research was undertaken in six districts of Tamil Nadu, namely Thiruvallur, Vellore, Madurai, Sivagiri, Tirunelvelli and Chennai. The districts were chosen due to the work carried out by Tamil Nadu Women's Collective (TNWC) in these districts. In each of the districts, five villages were selected on the basis of active participation of TNWC staff in the farming practices and the involvement of women farmers. TNWC as a rural-women based organization was the medium through which these districts were chosen as case-study of this research. The staff of TNWC in the villages acted as intermediaries between the researcher and the subjects, that is, rural dalit women farmers. The staff of TNWC also acted as language translators for facilitating communication between the researcher and the subjects. Interviews were conducted with 30 women farmers in each district and focussed group discussions were carried out with self-help groups in each of the village. The fieldwork was carried out in two phases: from August to September 2013 and in March 2014. Documents relating to land litigation cases were collected and studied. The daily patterns of their activities in the light of studying their farming practices, the need for a proliferation of these practices and their subsequent outcomes were also observed. By visiting a village each day, interviews were conducted with the women farmers. Interviews conducted were formal as well as on an informal basis. Hence a kind of dialogue was generated between the researcher and the subjects. Collective farming is a progressive method used by the women, especially dalits as it empowers them through participation in decision-making in relation to agricultural practices whether it is about seeds, crop-cultivation, harvesting etc. They are not

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dependant on any external source or authority, no governmental or state apparatus support is required by them in the functioning of this kind of farming.

They also experience financial sovereignty in the sphere of domestic household with no support required from their male-counterparts or male-heads of the family. This enhances the scope and arena of rural agricultural economy by bringing in the marginalised women who were otherwise merely chained to domestic household tasks and activities. This highlights the significance of the creation of food sovereignty, advocating its strong presence, utility and continued significance. The need for such sovereignty is felt all the more in the light of depleting economic and financial condition of dalit families who are affected by the stagnation of traditional methods of farming on one hand and the changing environmental concerns on the other complementary effort is the role played by the TNWC in supporting and promoting the practices of food sovereignty among the individual as well as collective women farmers of Tamil Nadu. Food sovereignty is the need of the hour not only in Tamil Nadu but also other parts of the Indian sub-continent which face the challenge of non-performance or low performance by the state and central government as well as depletion in the availability of natural resources.

A significant part of this sovereignty is feasible and facilitated through the collective communions which have been successful in terms of their durability and local legitimacy within the local socio-economic, political and cultural atmosphere. Additional help provided by the Women Sarpanch leaders and Self Help Groups has led to a decent standard of living besides providing social empowerment. In the wake of preservation of the ecology of land amidst the 'human wars' are posited questions about preserving the integrity of the land, shielding it from an unnatural fabric of undesired 'development' under the name of modernity. The garb of generating employment opportunities, which usually stagnates after a period of time, results in the eventual loss – the loss of the land, the loss of the only source of survival—affecting the naturally-existing ecology. Moreover, the expansion of local knowledge of these women farmers eventually aids in expanding the nature of agricultural reforms and bringing in a new, alternative, and authentic modernity.

The political legitimacy and authority over land in rural India resides in the hands of the local population. Their demands and claims ought to be taken into consideration in order to arrive at an inclusive policy making. The practice of collective and organic farming has introduced and made remarkable changes: enhanced awareness about farming and its significance for women, the utility and long-term effectiveness of farming as a dynamic practice rather than a stagnant one, imparting informal education on farming techniques and functioning of machinery and equipment, addressing environmental concerns by invoking a sense of belongingness, invoking a sense and a spirit of social, ethical and moral responsibility among the youth by taking into consideration their views and perspectives in participatory decision-making. Nevertheless, what one learns and gains from another significant section of these models is the following number of characteristics among other results and outcomes: introducing a gender(ed) perspective to the reading of the law, showcasing to the other sections of the society the underlying importance of women to the land through depicting the strong relations they develop with their land, manifesting an important aspect of the concept of women's social and legal participation and empowerment, diversifying and declassifying the legal claims in the courts of law through women activists and women legal advisors themselves becoming torch bearers and proponents for a pertinent cause of gender social justice in the Indian society.

Thus, the lessons learnt and benefits accruing are transcendental, cross cultural, inter disciplinary in social thematics, as the concerns, issues and perspectives are of significance not only for the Indian sub-continent but also other developing countries around the world.

Supriya Verma
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Dalhousie Road to Dara Shikoh Road, Race Course Road to Lok Kalyan Marg, Aurangzeb Road to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Road, Gurgaon to Gurugram- the list is endless. These are only recent; the past has countless examples of names being changed. When the capital's central landmark Connaught Place was renamed to Rajiv Chowk and Connaught Circle to Indira Chowk, it led to a huge protest in the Parliament and the streets. However, it continues to be referred by the common people as Connaught Place. The guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India in 1975 clearly lays down that "changes in the names of street/roads etc. not only create confusion for the post offices and public, but also deprive the people a sense of history. Therefore, it was decided that the name of existing streets/road etc. should not be changed." Yet, this judgment ceases to dampen the spirits of government officials who continue to change the names of numerous landmark places. The question remains, is this a time utilizing practice or are there no significant issues pending with the Government and the NDMC (New Delhi Municipal Council)? When India's most famous address 7, Race Course Road was renamed to 7, Lok Kalyan Marg, the former J&K Chief Minister commented the following on Twitter:

> "It's so good to know that everything is alright with the world & we can focus on the stuff that really matters - renaming roads #7LKM
>
> - Omar Abdullah (@abdullah_omar) September 21, 2016"

On August 28, 2016, the Aurangzeb Road was renamed to Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Road to pay tribute to the "Missile Man" of India in the meeting of NDMC chaired by Chief Minister of Delhi, Mr. Arvind Kejriwal, on the basis of requests by BJP MPs Meenakshi Lekhi and Mahesh Girri, and Aam Aadmi Party's trade wing Secretary Vipin Rohilla. The supporters of the decision point to the popular perception of Aurangzeb as "a cruel, dictatorial and despotic ruler", and "to the need of correcting mistakes of our past."[1] The question that arises here is whether an activity as trivial as renaming a road can truly honour Dr. Kalam in any significant way. Dr. Kalam who was the "people's president", would have loved to see work happening in the real interests of people rather than time being wasted on renaming roads irrespective of claims and motives. The renaming of Gurgaon to Gurugram has an interesting backstory. The town derives its name from the Hindu mythological figure Guru Dronacharya: the village was given as "gurudakshina" to him by the Pandavas, leading to the name of 'Gurugram'[2] which eventually got distorted to 'Gurgaon' in the course of time. The renaming evoked mixed reactions. While some said it was the right step and would not hamper administrative work, some felt that it would entail unwarranted expenses and the city had already made a place for itself in the global map as Gurgaon. Embarq India manager, Sarika Panda Bhatt, who was the leading force behind the "Car Free Day" said that "As the state government decides to change the city's name, they should also look ahead at changing the road mobility situation, the waste management and the situation of diminishing forest cover. What is urgently required in Gurgaon or Gurugram is to bring radical changes in the development of this city."

The nomenclature of roads, cities, streets etc. varies from place to place and is politically motivated. The ruling parties have repeatedly used their idols' names for roads, streets etc. according to their convenience and indefinite claims. There are over 74 buildings and roads, 64 central/state government schemes, 98 universities/educational institutions, 51 awards, 28 tournament/trophies and many more things named after the Nehru-Gandhi family.

The time has come to realize the need of the hour rather than engaging in nomenclature politics. Real work should be done towards the cleaning up of Delhi which currently stands at a shameful sixteenth rank in the World Pollution Index, 2017 rather than renaming streets and roads.

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[1]   Available on http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/simply-put-the-procedure-of-renaming-roads-and-reasons-for-seeking-change/ Accessed 25.2.17

[2]   Available on http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/gurgaon-renamed-as-gurugram/article8467206.ece Accessed 25.2.17

The Right to Self-Determination as A Universal Value

Aanchal Manuja
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Self-determination at an individual level is a microscopic nuance of the right to self-determination that includes various authorities you can delegate to yourself such as what to wear, what gender binary to identify yourself with, if at all etc. However, the concept of self-determination at a macro level is much more complex and contentious today, given the contemporary conflicts that prevail around us and is what this article would be dealing with.

Let me make myself clear, I am not principally against the idea of self-determination but I am contesting the word universal as a prefix that comes with it. Self-determination is the right of a nation or a particular area of the nation to freely determine its political status and pursue its model of development without external influence.

Who seeks self-determination? It's mostly minorities or disgruntled sections consolidated around certain identity markers who tend to seek the right to self-determination. These sections separate themselves from the outside world and occasionally demonize or alienate those who don't fit their identity. Once self-determination becomes a right accessible to anyone on their whim, it wouldn't remain a right but will transcend into a global phenomenon with the emergence of a new nation state every day. It's important to give a little historical context here. Self-determination as a concept emerged during the colonial times, given the need and relevance of establishing autonomy from colonisers. However, the relevance has subsided and the redundancy has increased. In modern history, even Nazis identified themselves as a nation of pure race by hailing supremacy of the Aryan race and being exclusionist. If Nazis, or say ISIS, were to be given access to this right, considering that they want to establish a caliphate based on draconian laws, the world would descend into chaos! The existing issues will get further aggravated. More substantively, it would lead to a domino effect and set an unwanted precedence. A certain group of people once declared free from a larger group would always have a sub-group dissatisfied with how they were declared free. These sub-groups would then seek recourse through declaring themselves free because that's what the right to self-determination permits them to do. Another sub-sub group would follow suit. Eventually, six people who don't appreciate how the taxes are levied will declare themselves a minority and opt out of the current mechanism as a manifestation of that emotion.

Another major problem that comes along with it is tied to the nature of what identities are and how they are formed. Ethnic identities are not merely ascriptive in nature but are evolved and constructed through a process of growth where groups acquire language, dialects, culture, self-consciousness etc. Given that no identity is perfectly homogenous and contains many new potential identities, the process of seeking self-determination would have absolutely no end.

However, the most pertinent question to ask yourselves about this is that, does it actually address the predicament? Certainly not. If grievances exist, legal recourses such as forms of protests are a better way to go about it simply because mere change of political status doesn't solve the issue but just shifts the paradigm of its existence. For example, the Western Sahara dispute existing between Morocco and Mauritania couldn't use self-determination as a one-size-fits-all remedy. The claims, conflicts and complaints existed in a separate space. The examples of the ongoing conflict of Israel and Palestine as well as of South China Sea are all offshoots of the same problem.

More importantly, it absolves the value of integration and gives a higher pedestal to assimilation which is the process of a group conforming to majority to fit in and losing out on its identity as people have the recourse of escaping integration now. Moreover tolerance for cultures other than our own will never develop with concepts like Multiculturalism dying slowly. The government will be able to get away with never being accountable to these sections as well because now if they are dissatisfied, they can break away instead of questioning the government in the first place which is what it should be doing.

Therefore, certain ideals as great and politically correct as they sound always have nuances which when sought out break the illusion of those ideals. Self-determination happens to be one of them.

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Moral policing refers to the punishment given by conservative members of a society including the police force, politically active people and civil society in general to members who don't comply with the cultural and societal norms that conservatives adhere to. In India, this takes a legal form via exploitation of a provision in the constitution according to which people can be arrested for committing "obscene acts". The Section 294 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), states that "whoever, to the annoyance of others, a) does any obscene act in any public place, or b) sings, recites or utters any obscene songs, ballad or word, in or near any public place, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three months, or with fine, or with both."[1] "Obscene acts" itself is an open-ended term in the given section, an ambiguity that is taken advantage of, by conservative members of the police.

There have been numerous incidents of moral policing that have made the national headlines over the past couple of years. Some of these incidents are as follows:

1. In Mangalore, (August 2015) a youth was stripped and brutally assaulted in full public view by suspected right-wing activists. The Muslim youth was reportedly beaten up for being in the company of a Hindu girl in the communally sensitive area of Mangalore.[2]

2. In April 2015, a youth in Kerala's Thrissur district was beaten to death by a mob after being found in the house of a woman. Initial police probe indicated that the incident was the outcome of moral policing.[3]

3. 13 couples and 35 others were rounded up by the Mumbai police following raids at hotels. Consenting adults who checked into several hotels in Madh Island and Aksa area found policemen knocking on the doors of their rooms and rounding them up. Days after the incident, the police admitted that they made a mistake and an inquiry was ordered. It was the section 110 of Bombay Police Act 1951 that has allowed the Mumbai Police to book people for "indecent acts" on numerous occasions by taking advantage of the ambiguity around the term "indecent" in the act.[4]

Such incidents are commonplace in India, which is plagued with social conservatism. In a society shaped by a myriad of cultures which emphasize holistic values of community living, social conservatism prevails. Modernization in India has not been realized as holistically as it has in European countries. India is somehow a mix of modern and cultural values. Indian society consists of both the modern notions of freedom, liberty, equality as well as the traditional beliefs which are primarily dominated by religion and patriarchy and lay down societal norms which are discriminatory against women. However, policing individuals in the name of culture is inconsistent

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[1] https://indiankanoon.org/doc/594493/
[2] http://indianexpress.com/article/india/five-episodes-of-moral-policing-that-made-national-headlines/
[3] http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/kerala-youth-beaten-to-death-in-shocking-case-of-moral-policing/
[4] http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/mumbai/mumbai-hotel-raids-made-a-mistake-cops-were-overzealous-admit-mumbai-police/

with the modern values India collectively pursues. The law shouldn't allow for self-proclaimed guardians of the national culture to exist. The Section 294 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) is a draconian law that should either be repealed or amended to define the term "obscene act" as a sub-clause.

Moral policing has a crippling effect not only on the social fabric of a nation but also on a woman's development as an individual. It takes the form of verbal harassment and defamation at the hands of local people, aggression by the police, lack of freedom to move etc. People around a growing woman try to act like protectors of her honor. They keep a check on her movements, reprimand and correct behaviors that are inconsistent with the society's norms, report her movements and behaviors to her guardians and try to enforce patriarchal norms on her.

Patriarchy transcends class and caste in India. It is found both in rural and urban settlements, contrary to popular belief. Among the educated class, moral policing takes the form of keeping track of a woman's personal life, reporting to her guardians about any reprehensible or disgraceful behaviors as well as shaming her in public eyes if she does not comply with societal norms. A woman in India grows up being shaped and molded by the society's unwritten norms and taught to follow those norms above all else. And if she doesn't do so, she will bring 'dishonor' to the family. The belief that a family's honor is equal to a woman's social conduct is exclusively Indian. This belief does not only hinder a woman's individual growth but also of the collective society. Moral policing affects men and women alike. In the 3 cases of moral policing mentioned in this article, men suffered from police brutality because of being found with women. The social conservatism that prevails in India is a mixture of age old religious, cultural, traditional and societal beliefs which are antithetical to the current context of modernity. Conservative beliefs like man and woman shall not engage in pre-marital physical relations, women shall be dressed appropriately, women shall remain indoors at night, women and men should not celebrate Valentine's Day (or else be forced to marry each other) have been reiterated by innumerable Indian politicians and government officials. Mrs. Maneka Gandhi, the Minister of Women and Child Development once stated in 2016 that 'marital rape' cannot be included in the purview of rape laws in India due to factors such as poverty, illiteracy and religious beliefs.[5] According to her, a marital rape law would lead to strife within Indian families. With such a political leadership, the future of the Indian society appears dismal.

It is high time that we all truly realize the values enshrined in our rich constitution and stay true to the values of justice, equality and liberty. We must actively make decisions for our own lives, as independent individuals, without being held back by social conservatism irrespective of gender, class and caste. We must behave, act, dress according to our will and not let 'societal norms' impede our individual growth.

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[5]   https://thewire.in/24649/activists-angered-by-maneka-gandhis-altered-stance-on-marital-rape/

Anjali

BA(H)Political Science II Year

On the eve of first general elections held in India post-independence (1951-1952) the whole world looked upon us as we entered a new era of constitutional democracy. Many doubted our capacity to successfully conduct democratic elections. But we stunned everyone with a peaceful transition of power and successful elections while everyone marvelled at the grant of the constitutional guarantee of universal adult suffrage to Indian citizens at a time when many of the first world countries were yet to grant this right to their populations. India thus set a milestone in the legacy of liberal democracy and rightly proved itself to be the largest democracy in the world.

Over the years however, India has witnessed a continuous degradation in electoral practices especially pertaining to the issues of electoral funding. A rampant supply of corporate funding to political parties during elections and resultant abuse of power and a simultaneous weakening of political authority are serious issues that confront the country today.

Corporate funding to political parties in India
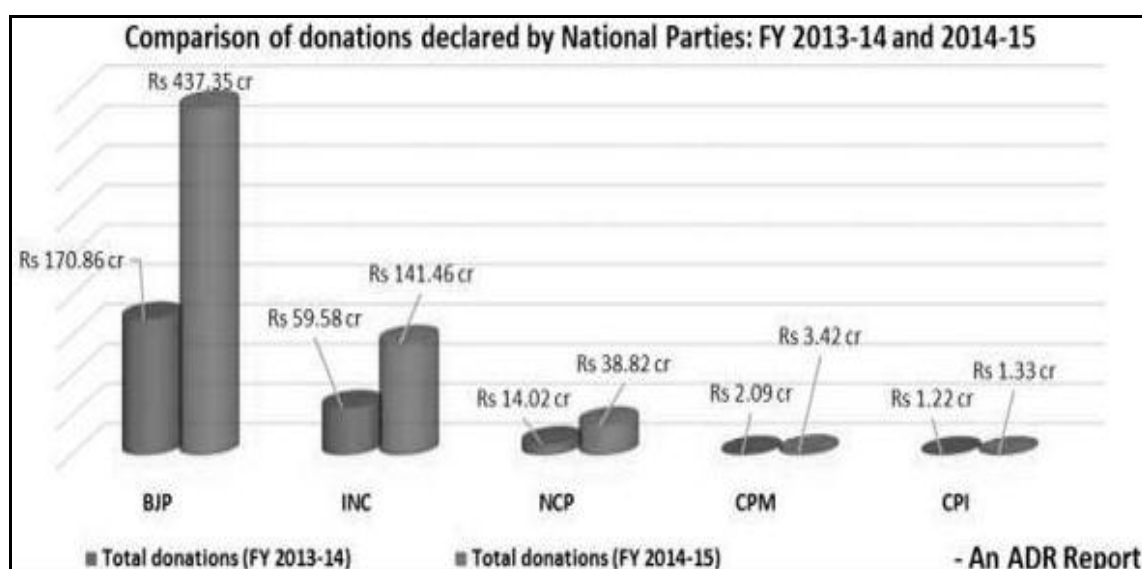
Source: adr.india.org

As per the above diagram (in accordance with the statistics provided by the Authority of Democratic Reforms) almost all the major political parties in India have witnessed a whooping increase in political funding. A large proportion of this funding is corporate funding. For instance Bharti-led Satya Electoral Trust and companies including Sterlite Industries, Cairn India, Lodha Dwellers, Torrent, and Crompton Greaves emerged as the top contributors to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ahead of the crucial general elections in 2014. Such big corporate donors, which contributed in excess of Rs. 1 crore each, accounted for at least a third of the Rs. 363 crore raised by the BJP.[1] The Congress, on the other hand, raised Rs. 59 crore that year. Big donors accounted for about 80 per cent of the Sonia Gandhi-led party.

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[1]   Available on http://www.rediff.com/business/report/pix-special-big-corporate-donors-to-the-bjp-congress-in-fy14/ 20150216.htm (Accessed 13.02.17)

The impacts of increasing role of corporate funding in elections and the dissemination of this funding to lower rungs to lure the voters through provision of short term material benefits (cash, consumer goods) can be disastrous not only for the health of democracy but also for the political parties themselves.

Loss of autonomy:

Increase in corporate funding results in erosion of political authority. With provision of funding, it becomes easier for the corporate houses to shape government policies in their favour. The political parties do not have any substantial authority of their own anymore since they now implement the corporate agenda in their policies. Thus, inequality becomes further entrenched since such policy initiatives increase the concentration of resources in top one percent of the population.

Vicious cycle of dependency

Most of the political parties utilise party donations so received to lure the voters in their election campaigns through provision of material benefits. And since most of their counter-parts resort to similar practices there is no hundred percent guarantee of winning the loyalty of the voters. At the same time once they resort to such practices, they can no longer withdraw from them since they end up creating an expectation on part of the voters for short term electoral benefits. Thus, they get trapped in the vicious cycle of constantly depending upon electoral malpractices with no guarantee of a winning seat share. It also reinforces their dependency on corporate funding.

Corruption within the party rungs

With huge flows of party funding and meagre transparency mechanisms, as the funding flows from the highest to the lowest rungs of political parties, it becomes an easy prey to corruption. The politicians at the lower rungs often hoard the money meant for party electoral campaigning for themselves creating a financial void and the consequent need for greater funding making political parties dependent on corporate houses.

Development- the best winning guarantee

It is high time that the polity in India realised that huge corporate funding and luring voters through petty benefits will render them hollow in the long run. The best way to sway the voter loyalties in their favour is to ensure the effective designing and implementation of development policies. With many state assembly elections ahead of us we can only hope that the political parties abstain from malpractices, if not as a moral and legal imperative then at least with the spirit to safeguard their political integrity and economic independence.

A Moment of Introspection: Reflections on True Meaning of Life and Religion

Bhavneet Kaur

BA(H)Political Science II Year

Born at the dawn of spring, I was no different from the people of the "traditional" world. A gullible mind with a pleasant smile endowed with the same bodily features and a similar eager admiration towards the journey of life. But then there was a difference- a distinction not so oblivious for a child but a major concern for the others around. Yes, that was my RELIGION, an inflexible institution in the Indian subcontinent. They say the difference lies in our religion, a title, a mark that transcends as one enters the world of materialism. It follows you, grudgingly or eagerly till your demise. My question is - who can decide my virtues? Who can dictate the principles I choose? Who governs the rituals I espouse? Does being born in a family of a particular religion ultimately drag me to the adopted institution? Is heredity a satisfactory response for whether I choose to pray or not? Does it matter whether I choose to fast or find it a futile exercise? These pertinent questions shall always await an answer. The bottom line is that irrespective of the tangible sectarian marks, at the heart of every religious text and the core of all religious scriptures, lays the clear and solemn message of HUMANITY- the message of love, the call for goodwill (the victory of good over evil as endorsed in the Ramayana) and the search for a true benevolent inner being. The irony lies in the fact that while the tally of active religious adherents is ever increasing, the message of humanity seems lost in the dreary land of violence, communal hatred and narcissism. The so-called guardians of humanity indulge in bigotry and portray their true wicked selves to the extent of demeaning, degrading and destroying the land of communal harmony, mutual belongingness and fraternity. Consequently, the abode of happiness stands fully transformed into a valley of despair and panic. The act of an individual becomes an identity for the community; a misdeed of one individual obscures the holistic virtues of all and reason becomes a mirage. The lingering question remains - how can a self-designed artificial institution overlook the individuality of a person? Can we not behold a person by gauging his "rationality" rather than the religion he belongs to? And above all, does being born in a particular sect ultimately levy on him the same virtues, the same principles and most significantly the same path as traversed by his religious ancestors, that too in the 21st century?

Today must be the day, the day of introspection through a reiteration of the words of Rabindranath Tagore:

"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high where knowledge is free and the world has not been broken

Up into fragments of narrow domestic walls.......

Into that heaven of freedom father

LET MY COUNTRY AWAKE, LET MY COUNTRY AWAKE."

Mrinalini Kumar

BA(H)Political Science III Year

Adlai Stevenson said, "As citizens of this democracy, you are the rulers and the ruled, the lawgivers and the law-abiding, the beginning and the end."[1] The administration is the most obvious part of the government; it is the government in action; it is the executive, the operative and the most visible side of the government according to Woodrow Wilson.[2] Therefore, the concern about corruption is as old as the history of government. Consequently, the concepts of integrity, transparency and accountability have been identified by the UN as part of the founding principles of public administration. The devastating effects of the lack of these principles can't be underestimated as they have a very real human as well as political cost. So how can public participation really help us in achieving our objective? While the public is perceived to be the passive recipient of government policies, engulfed in the false consciousness created by the governing class, it is also the one peeping through the garb of 'manufactured consent'. It might sound ironic that the capitalist class, which is the reason for a person's alienation from society at large, is actually also the reason for the resurgence of her association with it. This era of globalisation has made people an intricate part of the administration and governance model making them stakeholders with an equivalent voice.

National Integrity System, a framework approach towards corruption developed by Transparency International, comprises eight pillars including public awareness and public participation. Thus, there is consensus on the fact that letting the sun shine on government operations is a powerful antidote to corruption. However, while we have mediums to engage at present, what we lack is the will and sometimes awareness. While the poor, the major sufferers, lack not just digital literacy but even basic literacy to really question what's wrong, the middle class and the rich lack the will to make such changes. For instance, how many people know or are willing to know how to file an RTI? Who is a Public Information Officer? E-governance, Freedom of information acts, the ombudsman or the better-known Lok-pal bill are all redundant tools if not used by those who have been given the right to do so, the citizens. While it is common knowledge that such 'instruments' come with strings attached, like the RTI and Official Secrets Act in India, one must not forget that one step at a time helps in reaching the zenith which here means eradicating corruption.

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[1] Available on https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2016/5/12/house-section/article/ H2 318-4 Accessed 13.02.17

[2] Laxmikanth, M. *Public Administration.* New Delhi: Tata McGraw Hill Education Pvt. Ltd., 2011

Honeyshya Raj R.V.
BA(H)Political Science I Year

"I call it freedom when all Indians are fearless,
The wife fears her husband,
The child fears parents,
The students with the teacher,
The new daughter in law fears the in- laws,
The employee of the boss,
A young lady fears of what clothes to wear when walking on road.

To me Azaadi does not mean getting independence from the British,
But to Live in India peacefully, fearlessly, strong and as Independent Individuals"

Source: Azaadi.com

Ladakh
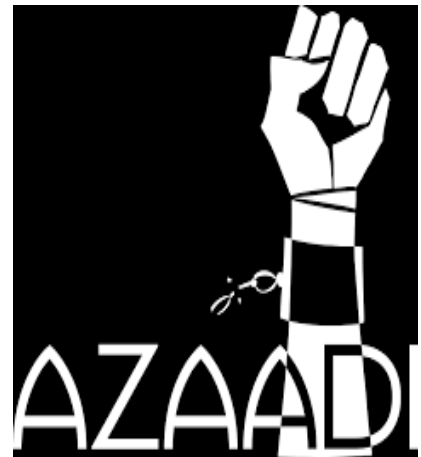
Nilza Wangmo
BA(H)Political Science II Year

Amidst the snow caped mountain
Serene Indus flowing down the valley
Beautiful monasteries standing tall
Colorful prayer flags fluttering

Khargung-La acting as the gateway for Siachen glacier
Different religions blending in together

Once a kingdom ruled by the Namgyal dynasty
once a part of silk route map

Yaks adding to the charm of the valley
Blue sky decorated with white clouds

Crystal clear lakes painted by the nature
This is what my hometown Ladakh looks like
It is truly a heaven on Earth.

Noor Bhatnagar

BA(H)Political Science I Year

The Middle-East can be just a geopolitical term for the commoner who reads the newspaper and dismisses the Headlines of Middle-Eastern 'Crisis' or 'Conflict as the general instability of the world. The layman is accustomed to it. Unfortunately, everyone has become accustomed to it– the victims, the newsrooms and the world. The situation has become like a daily dose of violence, key words being radical Islam, western intervention, failed governments, protests, killings, blasts, suicide bombing, refugee crisis etc. Hence, brewing the Middle Eastern soup. The Middle-Eastern situation was worsened the last year. As bitter 2016 was to the global arena, it was even more so to the Middle East. It would be a betrayal to the issue itself if we talk in terms of inaccurate and ambiguous facts. 'The Situation', as chaotic as it is, has various aspects to it. Various different countries, each having different needs and problems, comprise of what is termed as the Middle-East.

Source: Worldatlas.com

The Syrian Crisis is an example of the Middle Eastern Conflict as a part of which, anti-humanitarian acts plague the capital city of Aleppo. The Syrian conflict has its own complicated history with myriad of factors contributing to the appalling crisis or as the UN calls it 'a complete meltdown of humanity'. The turn of events from the fall of Bashar Al- Assad, to the intervention of the US and Russia making it, according to many political experts, 'a proxy war' between the US and Russian forces with Syria as the battleground. The Civil war which started in 2015 has worsened today. The dissection of the political participants also tells us that there are 4 alliances in the game: Supporters of Assad (including Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah), Supporters of the Rebels (supported by Jordan, Turkey, the Gulf States and probably the US), The Kurds and the terrorist organization ISIS. Among the worst hit are the refugees and millions of internally displaced people. The Syrian crisis is considered as one of the worst crisis of our time, where chemical weapons are used illegally to target civilians.

Israel-Palestine crisis constitutes another major Middle East conflict that refuses to be resolved. Israel being a neighbour to Syria is also affected by the Syrian crisis, where the huge influx of refugees and ISIS top the already existing Israel-Palestine dispute. An example of the inhumanity that constitutes this crisis is the Gaza Strip Violence that shook the world in 2015. The

misconception that goes with the conflict is that it is all about religious enmity, whereas, in reality, it is merely regarding the distribution of territory; a land being claimed by two parties. The issue of Jewish illegal settlers has been condemned by the UN, which has been ignored repeatedly with a claim that since Palestine isn't a state, the settlements are not illegal. The widespread violation of human rights caught the attention of people worldwide.

Iran, on the other hand wants Israel to be 'annihilated.' The Iran Nuclear Program was quite the global threat until the 2015 deal with US came into action, which brought about voluminous changes in stalling Iran's ambitious nuclear vision in exchange for dissolution of the International Sanctions which had been used to isolate Iran in the global arena. In doing so, the crisis of Iranian civilians ended because due to such isolation the economy had been crushed, healthcare was negligible and the food availability was close to none. Iran's neighbouring country is **Iraq,** which is plagued with radical terrorism of the ISIS. The ISIS have taken over major territories like oil fields, capturing unsupportive civilians and raping and selling women. The Obama government did permit a targeted air strike against the identified clusters of terrorists, but the success of it is the million-dollar question. The US intervention reminds us of the ill consequences of western intervention in the past like those of the Iraq War in 2003.

Down in the region is **Yemen,** whose civil war has worsened with the sands of time. The claims to the government are so many that even the concept of de jure and de facto government seems blurred. Humongous number of civilians have been murdered and killed in Yemen. **Saudi Arabia,** otherwise a relatively stable country has shown signs of financial problems even though it is the largest exporter of oil in the world. The Middle-Eastern crisis or conflict has been predicted to go on further and deeper by many international and reliable think-tanks. Even Nostradamus had prophesized that a nuclear war will happen in the middle-east.

But International Diplomacy and furthering of relations does not depend on prophesies. Rather, it depends on strategies. The global power is yet to take a completely different turn with the January 20, 2017 takeover of Donald Trump as the newest President of the superpower USA. The world is in mysterious suspense about the nature of foreign policy under his reign. But it would be a fool's errand to just believe that the global order solely depends on USA. It does, but the multipolar world's vision is coming into play, with gigantic chances of potential superpowers playing their own game of diplomacy. Only time will tell, what new ingredients will be added to the Middle-Eastern Soup, leading it to be a sweet victory or a bitter disaster?

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National Seminar-cum-Workshop
MIRANDA HOUSE & UGC
"Language, Ethics and Governance: Decoding Logic Argumentation and Rhetoric in Indian Politics"
Workshop on: "Logical Thinking and Writing Skills"
Venue: New Seminar Hall

GLIMPSE OF DEPARTMENT ACTIVITES

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GLIMPSE OF DEPARTMENT ACTIVITES

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Prerna Barua

BA(H)Political Science II Year

Terrorism and politics are never really considered along the same tangent. This is mostly because of the vastly different connotations that the two seem to possess. 'The Political' relates to governments, their functioning, relations between different states, etc. whereas terrorism refers to the unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians in the pursuit of certain aims. The very definition of terrorism points to the anti-government tendencies of the perpetrators. Yet, terrorism and politics, two seemingly unrelated concepts actually have a much deeper connection.

Whether we talk about the Taliban, Al Qaeda, ISIS, Al Shabab, or even the Boko Haram, most of these groups have certain political aims. An even more direct connection results from the fact that these groups are usually created when individuals are dissatisfied with the political institutions in their respective countries, and their functioning, or even the politically motivated forces of foreign countries. The extremist use of force, as well as the radical ideas that these groups possess, are in most part, aggravated by the so-called apathy of the respective governments of different nations.

The most common example that can be pointed out to depict this relationship is the creation of the extremist terrorist group, The Islamic State, more commonly known as ISIS. In a book called 'The state of Terror', authors Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger discuss the humble beginnings of the group as an offshoot of the terrorist organisation Al Qaeda. The groups gradually parted ways after Al-Qaeda cut off ties with ISIS, due to the latter's practices being too extremist and radical. ISIS aims to create its own 'caliphate' or the ideal state of practising Muslim individuals. The group's main strength is its ability to create terror in the minds of individuals through acts of inhumane violence, examples of which include the beheading of thousands of soldiers and foreign aid workers and mindless gun violence.

Source: Andy Singer

> "An American is dressed in an orange jumpsuit, apparently intended to echo the garb of al Qaeda insurgents captured and imprisoned by the United States. He kneels next to a man dressed in all black, his face masked, a knife in his hand. He puts the knife to the American's neck, and the camera cuts away to show the victim's severed head, displayed on the back of his lifeless body."[1]

Such acts of brutality are often ways to capture the imagination of citizens of affected nations, to create an image of power and mostly to spread fear and intimidate people. These groups act, with the intention of sending a message to the government of different nations- the message of the power of these groups, which are acting under the very noses of said governments.

The main question arises as to whether politics and diplomacy can be used to quell the rise and spread of terror. Can talks with terror groups ever be successful, or is it only an Airstrike, and gun violence that can ultimately end the mindless terror? Would the terror stop if all political aims are achieved? Could individual governments act to end terror in nations without the interference of more powerful foreign nations? These are important questions that need to be addressed. And lastly, the terrorist organisations are gathering more support than ever, the dilemma is, why? Are governments indeed becoming weaker, and are thereby unable to quell the rise of terrorist organisations; or a man identified as a terrorist always be another man's freedom fighter? An important question indeed!

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[1] Available on http://www.npr.org/books/titles/392362965/isis-the-state-of-terror Accessed 13.02.17

V. Juhi Sai

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How challenging will it be for a developing country in transition to a so-called cashless economy if three-quarters of the population in an advanced economy like the United States appear to either favour cash payments or a mix of both cash and non-cash payments while making purchases?

For one to be financially included cash is the most powerful weapon. Anyone can access it directly, without depending on any kind of financial intermediaries. Once the person has it, he/she can spend it whenever, wherever and in whatever quantity seems feasible without anyone being able to track that person doing it and without having any threat of being a victim of cybercrime. Do you want governments, banks or payment processors to have potential access to this information? This will lead to enormous power in their hands and there is even a scope for Orwellian levels of surveillance.

Cash, on the other hand, empowers its users. It makes them independent i.e. they can buy and sell without being dependent on anyone else. They can stay outside the financial system if so desired. This does not mean that we should all take our money out of the bank, but that we should all have the option to do so. Cash gives us that option. The financial system was actually a barrier to progress for the world's poor, while cash was a facilitator for them due to the digital divide between the rich and poor. Also, cash can be used for certain small transactions – a chocolate bar, a newspaper and so on. It will always be the secured and most direct form of payment. Cash transactions require no technical knowledge whatsoever. To the vast majority of consumers, the process of operating a digital wallet, pin credit card or even using one-time password as a second factor of authentication is technically challenging and a reason in itself to avoid electronic payments. An absence of clarity is the reason why people tend to avoid digital transaction. These are basic freedoms and rights that we take for granted and are so accustomed to these that the mere thought of taking them away is against their will, this acts as a major irritant to transition into a cashless society. Thus this "grand cultural revolution" (as termed by M. Venkaiah Naidu) will be ushered in through an executive fiat from above rather than it emerging from the people itself. This is in consonance with Marx's famous remark - "the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas".

A survey on online shopping and e-commerce conducted by the U.S.-based Pew Research Centre revealed that in an economy that is dominated by non-cash payment options, nearly a fourth of Americans use cash for almost all of their purchases. Less than a quarter of those surveyed go for non-cash or cashless purchases and more than half tended to use a mix of both cash and cashless payment modes. It also found that 60 percent Americans "try to make sure that they have at least some cash on hand, just in case they need it," What this reveals is that cash has not vanished from people's lives despite non-cash options being widely available. Other reports too suggest that though the share of cash in total consumer transactions has declined, it is in no place being written off as a significant option. And also the currency in circulation has been steadily increasing in the U.S, and demand for higher denominations has grown since the 2008 financial crisis. In fact, data on the amount of currency in circulation suggest that demand for cash is strong, despite innovations in smartphone technology and mobile payment apps. In fact, it is in itself a herculean task of getting everyone on board the cashless ship logistically. The World Bank estimates that there are nearly two billion people in the world without a bank account. In India, there are about a quarter of a billion without a bank account. Even those who have a namesake bank account (those created during the Jan Dan drive, for example) would prefer to use cash for most of their day-to-day transactions; 43 % of the accounts in India are dormant accounts though there are attempts to change this. As of April 2015, only 15% of adults in India reported using a bank account to make or receive payments.

 Thus, while a completely cashless society is practically not possible, there should be an optimal mix of digital payments and cash that should be in existence in an economy so as to push off the dire consequences of a cashless society, while simultaneously maximising the efficiency benefits that cashless transactions can provide. We should proceed with caution and not get carried away by the vision of a cashless society.

V. Juhi Sai & Smriti Tejaswee

BA(H)Political Science III Year

We are in the middle of the most serious refugee crisis since the Second World War, with millions of people risking everything to flee-terrifying conflict, disaster and poverty. Having escaped the unthinkable, many vulnerable families are met by closed borders, hostility, discrimination and abuse. Pushed into poverty by circumstances beyond their control, these desperate families need safety and protection – and have a right to be treated with dignity. Background and Lineage Among the Rohingyas are one of the most vulnerable. The Rohingya are Muslim minority group living in Myanmar's western Rakhine state; they practice a Sufi-inflected variation of Sunni Islam. The estimated one million Rohingya in Myanmar account for nearly a third of Rakhine's population. They have very limited access to basic services and good livelihood opportunities due to strict movement restrictions. They differ from Myanmar's dominant Buddhist groups ethnically, linguistically, and religiously. The Rohingya trace their origins in the region to the fifteenth century when thousands of Muslims came to the former Arakan kingdom. Many others arrived during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries when Bengal and the Rakhine territory were governed by colonial rule as part of British India. Since independence in 1948, successive governments in Burma, renamed Myanmar in 1989, have not accepted the Rohingya's historical claims and denied the group recognition as one of the country's ethnic group and citizenship. The Rohingya are largely identified as illegal Bengali immigrants, despite the fact that many Rohingya have resided in Myanmar for centuries. However, they do not have citizenship claims in Bangladesh as well making them stateless people. Though the etymological root of the word is disputed, the most widely accepted origin is that "Rohang" is a derivation of the word "Arakan" in the Rohingya dialect and the "ga" or "gya" means "from." By identifying as Rohingya, the ethnic Muslim group asserts its ties to land that was once under the control of the Arakan Kingdom, according to Chris Lewa, director of the Arakan Project, a Thailand-based advocacy group. They are in fact in a middle of a tragedy: persecuted at home, barely tolerated abroad and tortured due to the strategic calculations by powerful neighbours. Infact, their plight has been overshadowed due to refugee crisis in Europe. Discriminated and denied basic human rights as well as removed from the mainstream, they have no land that they can call home. It is as though they have been expelled from humanity itself. According to Amnesty International, the Muslim Rohingya people have continued to suffer human rights violations under the Burma junta since 1978.

Source: International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

This state-induced mass departure has been taking place since nine police officers were killed by Rohingya militants in October 2016. The result has been terrifying: hundreds of people were killed, disappeared, large number of women sexually assaulted, villages razed to the ground, and tens of thousands have fled the country. Those who escape the violence end up in the well-oiled trafficking networks of the region who smuggle them out for huge amounts of money. Some die en route; some make it to the borders of neighbouring countries only to be turned away: hordes, including little children, at times get stranded at sea. Myanmar does not agree to the fact that its military has done anything wrong. But the UN human rights office said in February 2017 that Myanmar's security forces have committed mass killings and gang rapes of Rohingya Muslims and burned their villages since October in a campaign that probably amounts to crimes against humanity and possibly "ethnic cleansing". Human Rights Watch described the anti-Rohingya violence as amounting to crimes against humanity. In August last year, Aung Sang Suu Kyi formed an advisory commission on Rakhine State under the chairmanship of Kofi Annan. It seems to be an advisory body for development and reconciliation rather than one that can investigate violence committed against the Rohingya community. While normalcy is needed, justice for the tens of thousands of Rohingyas, whose rights have been snatched away or killed by the state forces is important. Can there be peace without justice? The fact that all of these are happening under Aung Suu kyi is even more distressing, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her courageous and inspiring "non-violent struggle for democracy and human rights". Her response to the Rohingya crisis has been both inadequate and half-hearted. She has not fully acknowledged the extent of violence the Rohingyas are systematically subjected to by the government she leads (National League for Democracy).

Regionally, no unified or coordinated ASEAN response has been proposed to address the deepening crisis. ASEAN itself has been silent on the plight of the Rohingya. Groups like Human Rights Watch, the Arakan Project, and Fortify Rights continue to appeal to major international players to exert pressure on Myanmar's government. The Government must give priority to inter-communal dialogue, mediation and conflict resolution in Rakhine State. Thus, this new democracy needs to find a lasting solution to the Rohingya crisis that should not be either forgotten or forsaken by the global community. Migrants, where ever they may be, should be treated with the same degree of humanity.

K. N. Sridevi
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'3 years of struggle, 7 days of sacrificing, 3000 years of Jallikattu was saved just because all hands were united in the fight.'

Understanding Jallikattu: Jallikattu has been practised for thousands of years in Tamil Nadu and finds mention in the Sangam literature. It has been known to be practised since the Tamil classical period some 400-100 BC. It was particularly common among the ancient people like the Ayars who lived in the 'mullai' geographical division of the ancient Tamil country. Later, it became a general platform for the display of bravery with prize money being introduced for encouraging greater particpation. A seal from the Indus valley civilisation depicts a lone man trying to take control of his bull and is estimated to be about 2500 years old. Jallikattu is also known as Eru Thazuvuthal and Manj Virattu as well. It is popular mostly in the district of Madurai, Truchirappali, Theni and Dindigul of Tamil Nadu. This sport involves a natively reared stud that is set free in an arena filled with young participants. The challenge lies in taming the bull with bare hands. Ideally, participants try to grab the bull by its horns or tail and wrestle it into submission. The organiser of the event argues that it is closely associated with village life and the bull are specially reared for this purpose. Jallikattu is known to be a prosperous function in the traditions of Tamil Nadu which they practice during the Pongal celebration on Mattu Pongal.

Heritage and Cultural Context: Traditionally Jallikattu was played to judge a man's virility; it was seen as also seen as a way to win a woman's hand in marriage. The men who held on to the bulls till the end were declared winners. Kalithogai, a classic Tamil poetic work of Sangam literature speaks of how the bulls were a woman's best friends since it would help them select their rightful partners. The text also talks elaborately about how to identify the right kind of bull and train it. Centuries later the game continues to be about the virility of men. Modern day Jallikattu is played by farming communities in Tamil Nadu to handpick the strongest bull studs for their cows so that, in turn, they may produce high-quality calves. Sometimes small farmers are unable to afford to stud bulls, but are free to avail of the common temple bull belonging to the village, called the Koil Kaalai. In most villages in southern districts, bull taming is conducted on the second and third days of Pongal, the harvest festival. The villages of Palamedu and Alanganallur near Madurai have become centres of attraction as tens of thousands of people gathered to watch the spectacle of bulls from all over Tamil Nadu, close to thousands of them, being unleashed in the arena to test the timing skills of fighters. At Alanganallur, one can also see posters put up in remembrance of "Fallen Heroes", who died fighting the bulls. A sport that is gruesome as it is addictive, Jallikattu has become a rallying point for Tamil identity over the years. A ban on Jallikattu by the Supreme Court in 2014 has largely been seen as a negation of Tamil Nadu's cultural identities.

The Controversies Surrounding the Sport: It started in 2011 during the UPA rule, the environmental ministry added bulls to its 1991 notification, banning the training and exhibition of bears, monkeys, tigers, dogs and panthers. The notification was challenged in the Supreme Court and was upheld. Under the NDA government, the ministry in 2016 modified its earlier notification and declared that the sport could continue despite the existing ban. This was in direct contravention of the apex court order and was duly challenged by Animal Welfare Organisation such as People

for the Ethical Treatment of Animal (PETA). Subsequently, a stay order was issued by the court. The notification issued by the ministry became controversial as critics accused the government of appeasing Tamil voters with an eye on the upcoming state assembly elections. In 2017, the issue erupted once again after the death of former Tamil Nadu chief minister J Jayalalitha. Her close aid and newly anointed AIDMK General Secretary Sasikala Natrajan was embroiled in a war of word with DMK working president MK Stalin over Jallikattu. Stalin accused the AIADMK government of doing little to overturn the Jallikattu ban. Sasikala countered the accusation saying that it was under the UPA rule of which DMK was a key alliance party and that the ban was first imposed. A string of Tamil leaders has also advocated for lifting the existing ban**.**

 Mass Protests and Agitation: The first large protest occurred on 8th January 2017 when several groups organised largely via social media conducted a protest at the marina beach in Chennai. Not just the ordinary people of Tamil Nadu even the Tollywood Cinema Industry joined the protest. Tamil Actor Surya lashed out at animal right advocacy group PETA, which is aggressively campaigning against Jallikattu. Actor Rajnikanth further added that Jallikattu should be held to uphold the traditions of Tamil culture. Tamil Nadu's then acting Chief Minister O.Paneerselvam met Prime Minister Narendra Modi regarding the issue. After several days of protest, Jallikattu was finally legalised locally on 23rd January when the government of Tamil Nadu passed a bill to amend the PCA Act. As the legalisation is not Indian Federal Law, but rather state law there is concern from Indian legal experts that Jallikattu could be banned once again by the Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court in its judgement banning Jallikattu, goes into great detail about the torture that is meted out to the bulls during the play, including instances of lemons being squeezed into the bull's eyes, chili powder rubbed onto their genitals, the force-feeding of liquor and even cases of the animal having their tail twisted and bitten have been brought to light. The country's apex court also held that there is no merit in the argument that just because the sport has been practised for centuries it must be allowed to continue. By that token, no abhorrent social custom can ever be done away with. At present, outcomes of the debate are still unclear. Whether the protest in Tamil Nadu will result in a revocation of the Supreme Court order remains to be seen. Either way, it is the prerogative of not only the state government but also Tamil people, to ensure that the sport is strictly regulated to prevent any and all kinds of cruelty to the bulls and to take up the cause of conserving native breeds, independent of the Jallikattu tradition.

Source: www.googleimages.com

V. Juhi Sai

BA(H)Political Science III Year

With Finance Minister Arun Jaitely deciding against imposing any additional indirect tax burden on consumers, ahead of the goods and services tax (GST) implementation on July 1, 2017, other than increasing the tax rate of 'sin goods' to discourage people from smoking and consuming tobacco, consumers receive a major respite. The budget this year has a number of positive measures that include offering incentives to different stakeholders, cleansing the country of black money and boosting domestic spending. Thus it aims to 'Transform, Energise and Clean' India. In fact, the dovetailing of the railway budget, the abolition of the distinction between plan and non-plan expenditure and its early presentation mark a fresh break from tradition. **Incentivizing a digital economy -** To push towards the digital economy post-demonetisation, customs duty and excise rates of equipment used in making digital payments, and parts and components for their manufacture, have been exempted. The government also imposed a cap on cash transaction above Rs 3 lakh, taking forward the agenda to move towards a cashless economy. Union government plans to amend Drugs and Cosmetics Rules to ensure availability of drugs at reasonable rates. Finished leather products, solar powered cells and Liquefied natural gas (LNG) will be cheaper. At the same time, railway tickets booked online from the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) website will be cheaper as a service fee will no longer be charged. The service tax rate has remained unchanged. Light-Emitting Diode (LED) lights will be made cheaper as duty on parts of LED lights have been reduced. Similarly, duty on the solar tempered glass for solar powered equipment has been reduced.On the other hand, there has been increased excise duty on cigarettes, pan masala, beedis, and cashew nuts, prices of which would go up. Prices that would go up include filter and no-filter cigarettes cigars, and filter khaini, cheroots, cigarillos, zarda, gutkha as well as prices of mobile phones as duties have been increased on populated printed circuit boards (PCBs) for the manufacture of handsets. Drinking pure water will also be more expensive as replacement of imported RO membranes in water purifiers will get more expensive due to a 2.5 percent increase in customs duty on imported RO membranes. The tax rate for small and medium enterprises (bulwark of job-creation) with the annual turnover of up to Rs50 crore has been slashed that would indirectly increase consumers' disposable income. In addition halving the personal income tax rate from 10% to 5% for those in the lowest tax slab of Rs2.5 lakh to Rs5 lakh puts more money in the hands of this segment. All other taxpayers have been given a benefit of Rs 12,500 each.Thus, middle-class consumers will be happy as they will have more money in their hands It is expected that the tax cut would cost the government Rs 15,500 crores, some of that could boost consumption while the rest could be saved. Thus, government's approach seems to allow consumption to revive by itself, without creating inflationary pressures, on the back of improving economic conditions. But, rural consumption has been worst affected in recent years, with demonetisation making it worse. No direct benefit from the budget for rural consumers, but higher allocation could trickle down eventually??

Smriti Tejaswee

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Corruption takes birth in a society when its citizens fail to believe that the nation is a common property of all its citizen and the generation to come. Consider any segment or sector of our society be it education, health, media, politics, social, economic; you will find the dark marks of corruption everywhere. India is a democratic country. In a democracy, interest and welfare of the people is of paramount importance but corruption makes it impossible for people to reap the benefits of the seeds they sow. In order to combat corruption effectively, citizens should come forth and raise their voice against it. The promotion of national integrity is an integral process but sometimes promoting sustainable and equitable development are undermined if levels of integrity are not enhanced and corruption reduced. The politicians and corrupt government officials who are inebriated with power, try and take all the benefits. They often use the method of vote bank politics to gain the vote. The red-tapism and limitation of the legal framework within the country are some other major reasons that resulted in corruption in large number.

The fight against corruption cannot be won without support, participation and vigilance of the public. Public participation is a cornerstone of responsible governance and a fundamental prerequisite for achieving sustainable development and eradicate corruption. It moves beyond and creates opportunities for exchange of ideas, transparency, mutual learning and representative decision-making process. It's a goal of achieving better acceptable decision before the issues get polarized. An important pre-condition for enabling citizen is to scrutinize government, political parties and politicians are right to access information which had a long history of public participation where in 1990's masses demanded records of famine and account of laborers. Slowly the progress gained momentum and RTI came to force. This has helped to minimize corruption and also enabled the citizen to participate. Another was India against Corruption (IAC) which caught the attention of public around 2011. Even the Jan Lokpal Bill referred to as Citizen's Ombudsman Bill is an anti-corruption bill drawn up by civil society activists to investigate corruption cases. There have been many anti-corruption laws, Prevention of Corruption Act etc. enacted due to citizen participation. Public participation is regarded as part of people centered or human-centric principles and may be advanced as part of people first paradigm shift. Effective public participation means participation at local, state and federal level that would enable the people to learn. Civil society contribution to fight against corruption has taken various forms from awareness raising and educational programs and officially recognized participation in the analysis of existing legislation and institutional procedure. Therefore, the fight against corruption must be inclusive and citizen friendly and without participation, one cannot succeed.

Post-Truth Politics: The Only Road to Populist Politics in 21st Century

Mrinalini Kumar

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Post Truth, the Oxford Dictionary word of the year 2016, is such an integral part of our politics that we had to wait till 2016 to actually give it a name. Not only in the 21st century but the foundation of populist politics is actually based on post truth. Why otherwise do we think that parties field candidates of the similar caste background as of the electorate in a particular constituency? Why did Indian politics have an era of one party dominance? Why did Bush get re-elected as the US President even after his Global War on Terror (or rather Islam)? Why is the issue of Ram Temple being raised again in this UP election? Why did Donald Trump win the recent US elections? And the chain of 'whys' continues. To decipher a comprehensive understanding of post truth, our understanding of truth needs to be recapitulated. The truth is not merely an absolute universal fact. According to Mill, it is important to hear counter-arguments to a truth so that it can be re-articulated as truth is never monolithic. However, the absence of a respectable dialogue is what has led to this phenomenon of post-truth i.e. distortion of facts and appeal to emotions and personal belief. The rigidity of being caged in absolute mindsets, which should be like glass walls but instead are of stone, has not let this post-truth phenomenon die. We have remained so disaffected and disengaged with the existence of parallel truths that we have created not a one-party democracy, but a 'post post-truth' democracy where attaining power is as easy as uttering an emotional arrow of words hitting the heart.

We generally think that Gramsci's 'hegemony' or Marx's 'false consciousness' are things of the past. However, even today they distance us from reaching the truth. The ruling ideas of the epoch are always of the ruling class, which comprises not just the political class but the bourgeoisie as well. Thus, post-truth helps in manufacturing consent for one's hold on power and capital. One can, therefore, say that post-truth is a mere name change for false consciousness. We have been living in a post-truth era and will continue to live in it until we become Plato's envisioned philosopher kings or queens and climb out of the 'cave'. It isn't the right or the wrong road to tread upon but it is currently the 'only road' available to people, whether politicians or the electorate, whose partnership and cooperation has made this road an 'expressway to populist power'.

Debahuti Sharma

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Assam is often called 'a land of colours'- a land of colourful nature and of colourful people. A highway of international migration of men, materials and ideas since the beginning of human history, Assam has always been a meeting ground of races and cultures. However, some of them still groan in the backyard of progress and different sections live in different stages of development. Time has not moved for them since the earliest conceivable ages. This has led to demands for reservation being raised by various communities in order to enable them to participate in the economic race as equals and to improve their standard of living. At present, the ST community comprises of 14% of the total population of the state. And it is stated to expand with 6 more communities in a dispute to be inducted into the creamy layer. Presently, the demand for tribal status is coming from 6 communities- Ahoms, Morans, Koch-Rajbongshi, Mataks, Adivasis (tea-tribes) and Chutiyas. Their demand for reservation is backed by the ruling BJP along with the AGP and the Congress. The 3 parties have expressed their support for the last 3 Assembly and Lok Sabha elections. If these tribes are granted reservation, Assam will turn into a tribal majority state. Out of these 6, the situation concerning the Adivasi (tea tribes) is very interesting. These people already have ST status in the states they originally came from.[1] In Assam they are clubbed together as 'tea garden labourers', 'ex-tea garden labourers', 'tea garden tribes', 'ex-tea garden tribes', etc. and are in the race to get reservation for themselves again.

According to The Co-ordination Committee of Tribal organization of Assam (CCTOA), these communities are educationally and economically advanced, as well as numerically significant, and there is no way the existing ST communities can compete with them.[2] The body claims giving them ST status would wipe out the existing communities and has repeatedly forwarded their case to the Centre.

Source: thenortheasttoday .com

The granting of tribal status to these communities would have political ramifications. The decision could enhance electoral prospects of the BJP which has constantly expressed concern over illegal immigration from Bangladesh, resulting in demographical changes in the state.[3] According to PTI, almost 80 out of 126 Assembly Constituencies are likely to be reserved for the tribals if the 6 communities get ST status. This will be possible only when the next delimination exercise is undertaken. However, the Registrar General of India has turned their proposals of reservation down. The Central Government has set up the Singla Committee to consult with the State Government and the agitating groups. Union minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju has said that the government would change the modalities, if necessary, to include the ST list.

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[1] Available on https://eclecticnortheast.in/demand-tribal-status-assam-heats/ Accessed 13.02.17
[2] Available on https://eclecticnortheast.in/demand-tribal-status-assam-heats/ Accessed 13.02.17
[3] Available on http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/6-Assam-tribes-may-soon-get-Scheduled-Tribes-status/ articleshow/47335391.cms Accessed 13.02.17

Sehal Jain and Mrinalini Kumar

BA(H)Political Science III Year

Refuge for refugees has become a political dilemma of the 21st-century and the rise of xenophobic forces has further aggravated the problem of their accommodation. Be it the Syrian crisis, 1971 Bangladesh crisis or Rohingya crisis, the background story has always been that of exclusion. The refugee issues seem to be balancing on the taut rope between that of idealism and pragmatism. On the one hand, where denying refuge to refugees is an ethical issue, contradictorily even after their acceptance, the pragmatic reality of their conditions has been a constant matter of debate, thereby becoming a political dilemma.

Notion of 'Self' and 'Other' in context of Refugees

The composite ideology of modern nation state (comprising of population, territory, government and sovereignty) and citizenship have cemented the idea of the rights enjoying-citizens as the self, the refugees as the 'other'. The 'self' regard themselves as superior and the 'other' as the harbinger of diseases, instability and as encroachers of scarce resources. This distinction is, however, highly arrogant, since the 'other' are looked down upon only because they do not have a roof and the 'self' has a nationality to be proud of. This issue of refuge became politically charged mainly after the emergence of the modern nation-state, a bi-product of the rationalist liberal discourse, which led to a consolidation of state boundaries as well as identities, whose initial porosity kept such issues at bay. In the 21st century, the rise of xenophobic forces and constant association of religion and terrorism has made the problem double its intensity.

Globalisation and Refugee Crisis

At the root of every conflict including that of refugees lie the incessant struggle for the control of resources that is already diminishing due to pressure of population and failing environment. With the advent of globalisation the boundaries have become pervasive. As the logistics of capitalism is dependent on cheap labour and raw materials mostly imported from developing societies, it is imperative for the global forces to keep the system in fluid state. An ideology that propagates the creation of a global village where people are global citizens and borders cease to exist is actually limited to developed countries. Whereas, there is inherent push for stretching the national boundaries in order to make conducive the trade and economic exchange. No such effort has been made to make system more sensitive and responsive to the world refugee crisis. This shows limitation of our project of integrated world.

Resource Allocation

The world system is structured in an asymmetrical way. There is constant tussle for control over resources. At the root of every conflict including that of refugees lie the incessant struggle for the control of resources that is already diminishing due to pressure of population and failing environment. Because of the already increasing pressure on the fragile infrastructure on most of the countries there is a general tendency to decline refuge to the seekers. The constant fear of the 'other' occupying resources, employment and converting the self into minority has led to the rise of xenophobic forces which in turn has led to governments adopt stricter measures to secure their

borders. While refugees are defined, and protected by international laws, not all countries accept them. Even if they do, they continue to live in sub-human conditions, are only constitutionally protected and taken care of only near election, reducing them to mere vote banks.

Conclusion

Man, has made these boundaries and just because some of us were lucky enough to be born within apparently secure boundaries, we conclude that our state defines our identity. We argue that a certain pool of resources are ours and only belong to us and are, thus, ridden with a sense of apathy to those dying because of an ongoing civil war in their country or a natural calamity. It was their fault; thus, they should suffer. Struggling with this unburdened passion for consumption, humanity has lost all its human character. If an orphan is outside our door, we can't expect someone else to extend a helping hand towards them. While the argument has been that even their acceptance will not secure great lives ahead, the reality is that even becoming vote banks would ensure them some rights; they will have some roof over their heads and have at least one meal a day. The solution lies in becoming humans, not as Hobbes visualised- as self-seeking, self-regarding and as mere power seekers, but as we are, cooperative and empathetic, by becoming a ray of sunshine.

प्रिय पितृसत्ता

Sehal Jain
BA(H)Political Science III Year

प्रिय पितृसत्ता,

तेरा मेरा वास्ता कुछ पुराना सा है

बचपन से तेरा साया सा है

पर आज कुछ और ही सच

सामने आया है

तेरा सिर्फ़ साया ही नहीं ये सारी तेरी ही मोह माया है

वरना क्यूँ कहा जाता है कि यह घर मेरा नहीं है?

क्यूँ कहा जाता है कि शादी करना ही ख़ुशी दे सकता है?

क्यूँ जीवन अकेले स्वतंत्र बिताना अनैतिक माना जाता है?

क्यूँ माँ बाप तेरे अधीन होकर लड़की से पल्ला झाड़ने की बातें करते हैं?

हाँ, प्रिय पितृसत्ता ये तेरी ही छाया है!

Stanzin Zomskit

BA(H)Political Science II Year

Ladakh, which means 'the land of high passes' and includes the Khardung La (world's highest motorable road), Chang La, Tanglang La, Baralacha La, Lachulung La, is a high altitude province of Jammu and Kashmir. It is a cold landscape, with beautiful jagged mountains, a clear starry night sky, that can make tourists go weak in their knees. Ladakh supports a diverse population of Muslims, Christians and Buddhist. The values of secularism, fraternity and integrity enshrined in our constitution, are brought to life in Ladakh, where Muslims, Christians and Majoritarian Buddhist population celebrate each other's festivals and cultural activities together with unity. Being a strategically sensitive area, because of China and Pakistan trying to gain control over Ladakh, there can be seen a huge presence of Indian army, Indo-Tibetan Border Police Force securing the borders. The beautiful mountainous terrain is decorated with hamlets with its buildings and household infrastructures significantly different from the conventional infrastructural designs. Buddhist houses have a tradition of hanging colourful prayer flags having religious importance from flat roofs. Monasteries have colourful flags and prayer wheels which are supposed to be spun clockwise, typical of Buddhist places of worship. There are also Mosques and Churches managed by different religious groups to spread their own religious beliefs and ideologies. Ladakhis are self-sufficient in fuel, dairy products, organic vegetables and so on. Most famous festivals of Ladakh include Losar, mask dance, archery competition, Ladakh polo club. When it comes to the position of women in Ladakh, they enjoy a high status in society, equal educational rights and equal rights to inheritance of paternal property.

With the most welcoming and peace loving people, Ladakh is a favourite tourist destination for not only Indians but foreigners as well, not to mention, every traveller's dream bike ride through the national highway.

Source: www.googleimages.com

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Journey of Modern India: Contribution of Mrs. Indira Gandhi

Preeti Kumari

BA(H)Political Science III Year

The journey of modern India started at the stroke of the midnight hour. In our aims to realise the ideals of modernity: social, political and economic justice, liberty, equality, fraternity and dignity to all Indian citizens, we stand at a point where there's substantial progress made yet an arduous voyage ahead. In the journey we have already ventured upon, a number of people have played significant role. Indira Gandhi, the resilient and assertive political leader, served as the first woman Prime Minister of India through some of the most tumultuous times in the history of Independent India. Her contributions have often been subdued under the controversies that surrounded her political career. Her work continues to be largely assessed through the negative fallouts and political chaos many of her decisions led to. To thus sieve out her contributions to the development of India becomes a challenging task. However, this task is necessary to undertake so as to truly realize the worth of a leader's contributions and the myriad ways in which it shapes the future of a nation.

In a BBC poll conducted in the year 1999, Indira Gandhi was named the 'woman of the millennium' leaving behind Margaret Thatcher, the remarkable Prime Minister of United Kingdom and Mother Teresa, the founder of the Order of Missionaries of Charity amongst others. Through her policy pragmatism, Indira Gandhi had carved a niche for herself as a political leader. From nationalising banks to abolishing the privy purses, she has strived against the currents to take swift and significant policy decisions. It is because of these reasons that Pranay Gupte in his book "Mother India: A Political Biography of Indira Gandhi", had asserted that she was a true nationalist at heart.

Agricultural development was undertaken through policies of Green Revolution which had eventually transformed the agricultural scenario in India. Through the Five-Year Plan policies, she continued with objectives identified by the Constitution itself. There was also an emphasis on justice, employment generation and poverty alleviation. The overwhelming emphasis on self-reliance as reflected in her words "A nation's strength ultimately consists in what it can do on its own, and not in what it can borrow from others" was pursued throughout her tenures as a Prime Minister. Her administration has been crucial in supporting the logistics of Green Revolution.

In Indira Gandhi's vision, scientific development was crucial for the elimination of poverty and ensuring development. She believed in the efficacy of Nuclear Energy as a source of self-reliance and put India on the nuclear map through first nuclear test named Smiling Buddha, carried out in Pokhran, Rajasthan. Scientific development in her vision was intricately linked to economic development. One of the most fundamental decision in this regard was the nationalisation of banks. She started with institutional credit to assist social development.

While some of the key policies devised by Indira Gandhi have been discussed above, there is a very significant strand of her thought, vision and policy that has been largely overlooked. That is her vision for ecological conservation. In the First Global Conference on the Human Environment in June 1972 at Stockholm she made a significant speech where she linked the goals of environmental conservation to poverty alleviation. Emphasising on the intricacy of the interests of poorer nations and ecological

preservation she said, "We have to prove to the disinherited majority of the world that ecology and conservation will not work against their interest but will bring an improvement in their lives." As a result, the government imposed ban on exports of tiger and leopard skins in April 1969 and put an end to the safari hunts. Indira Gandhi also spearheaded the Forest Conservation Act 1980 which was enacted to help conserve the country's forests. These major policy initiatives have laid down the legal and policy framework to preserve forests and wildlife in India. The acclaimed conservationist Valmik Thapar rightly calls her the "wildlife's saviour" for the vision and decisiveness she had shown in ecological preservation at a point in history when environmental destruction was the norm to pursue economic development in India. This vision that set her aside from past leaders and dominant rhetoric transcended from the domestic arena to International politics.

Her historic role in the 1971 War with Pakistan and creation of Bangladesh is well documented and established. While the 'Indira Doctrine', another innovation in foreign policy imagination of India sought to establish India as a leader in the South Asian region through principles of bilateralism and reciprocity. The doctrine was a progressive initiative to pursue regional integration. She successfully declared Indian Ocean as a zone of peace, to secure the regions and India's security interests to curtail the increasing militarisation of the region. While some of her policies became unpopular and severely criticised like that of forced sterilisation, it is also important to give her due credits for the vision she provided to the country in stressful times. Like she said "The power to question is the basis of all human progress", we can keep questioning the pros and cons of all her decisions and her leadership in general but in the questioning, we need to recognise that her contributions and efforts to the development of Modern India has been immense. We should assess them both in the light of the realities of her time as well as today. It is only then can we truly understand the historical development of our own country.

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he-countrys-history/1/410426.html (Accessed: 31 October 2016).

Stanzin Zomskit

BA Political Science II Year

A woman should love herself, she becomes perfect when she accepts her imperfection.

A woman should try to let go of her past, enjoy the present and move towards the future.

A woman should be financially independent, so she can pay her bills and live life on her own terms.

A woman should not define

her beauty just by looks, but with wisdom, integrity, compassion and self-confidence.

A woman should not be embarrassed if she cries for little things, her tears define her genuineness, not weakness.

A woman should be bold, dream big and have faith in herself, there are odds to be defeated and stereotypes to be broken.

This is how a woman should be.

अस्तित्व

Pooja

BA(H)Political Science III Year

मेरा अस्तित्व तो हैं,
लेकिन मेरी पहचान नहीं,
घर तो मेरा भी हैं,
लेकिन माँ- बाप होते हुए
भी मेरा परिवार नहीं।

कसूर किसका हैं?
मेरा या फिर कुदरत का
कि दर्जा न मुझे मर्द का
मिला और न ही औरत का   ,
किन्नर के नाम से निकाल
दिया मेरी अस्मिता, मेरी
पहचान का फरमान।

समाज की गलियों का बोझ
मेरे स्कूल के बस्तों से
ज्यादा था।
न दोस्त यार न कोई जीवनसाथी
भूखे पेट की मरहम के लिए
भी तो बस एक ताली जो
मेरा साथ निभाती।

Garima
BA Programme III Year

They shared a common neighbourhood,
Even they were best friends since childhood
for their innocent eyes it was beyond imagination,
All the conflicting religious ideologies were nothing but a social creation!

As the religious tensions amongst the communities widened
the aura in and around became more tensed
their families too, stood against them and their untainted bond of friendship
and the unknown fundamentalism now became a hardship

Religious identity was never a limitation
But for the friendship with boys of 12,
It became a Restriction!
As their religious communities
far across the oceans and seas were seen,
in danger on the small television screen.
Conflict in their mother land
of the people whom they had forgotten beforehand,
Has now risen the religious consciousness
Living thousands of miles away,
For these Indo-Americans, tackling the situation had no other way!
There in India, religious conflict was day-by-day increasing,
Here in USA, the tiny Hindu Muslim,
Indian Pakistani friends were also suffering!
Religion again stood tall for separation, for antagonism,
For what not!
Even in the so called
Western, Modern & Developed American Society!

Yes, the scenario here was not like there,
It was quiet, it was calm
But somewhere deep, in those innocent hearts
Religious consciousness cropped up in a very wrong way.
In the battle of religions,
No religion turned out to be victorious,
As the battle is unending, it is continuous.
Rather it was Humanity
Which died!
The spirit of humanism
Which died!

Charukeshi Bhatt
BA(H)Political Science II Year

बात आई है तो सोचा कह ही दूं जो है मन में

पर डर है ये बात आपको लग जाएगी,

थोड़ी तीखी है, शायद घाव कर जाएगी

घाव से रिसता जाएगा खून, बूँद दर बूँद आपके बदन से

अब खून रिसता रहा तो आप मंदिर नहीं जा पाएंगे

और मंदिर नही जाएंगे तो मेरे पाप कैसे धुलाएंगे?

बस यही सोच के इस बात को आधा ही रख देती हूँ

आप मंदिर रखिये, मैं घाव और खून रख लेती हूँ।

By charukeshi

मेरी आबरू

Neha
BA(H)Political Science III Year
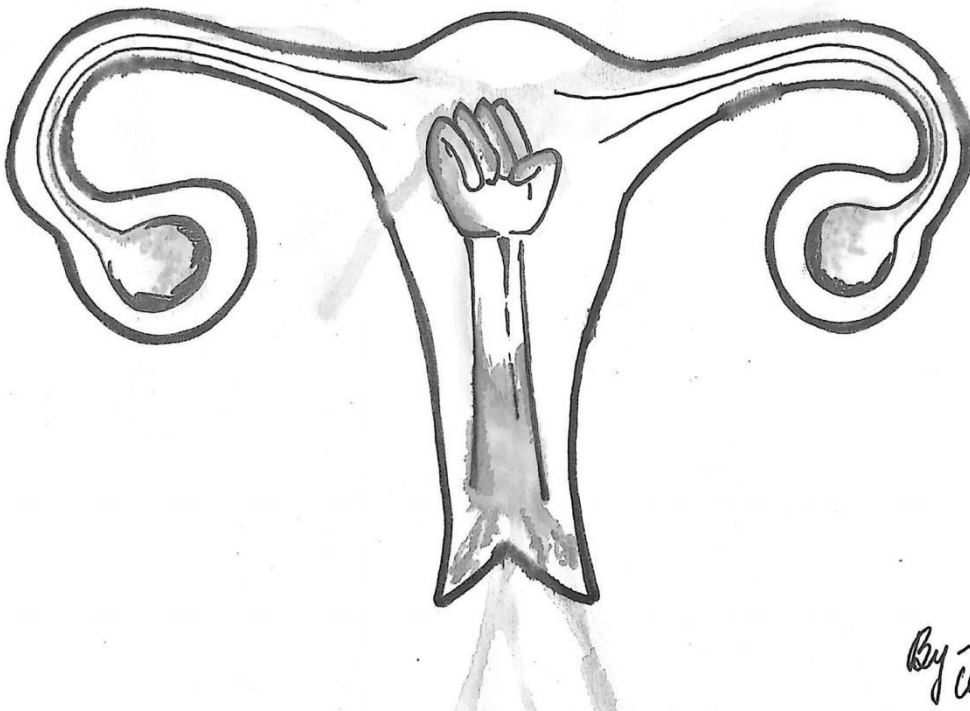
रूह काँप गयी मेरी

जब न चाहते हुए भी,

छुआ गया मुझे

सांस थम गयी मेरी

जब मेरे जिस्म को नोचा गया।

टूट कर रह गयी मैं

जब मेरी आबरू से खेला गया।

सिमट कर रह गयी मेरी दुनिया

जब मुझे कोड़ियों के भाव

बेचा गया,

इस दोहरे समाज के मायने

भी दोहरे हैं,

कहीं झूठी शान के लिए पूजा गया मुझे

कही वासना के लिए जिस्मफरोशी में,

रौंदा गया मुझे

कही सभ्य समाज के नाम पर

बेदखल कर दिया गया मुझे

सवाल तो बस इतना सा हैं, क्या फर्क हैं,

उनमे और मुझ में

जो उन्हें मंदिरो में और मुजरेखाने में

धकेला गया मुझे।

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मुसाफिर

Kajol
BA(H)Political Science II Year

ऐ मुसाफिर चला चल
मंजिल तभी तू पाएगा
न डर इन रूढ़िवादी जंजीरो से
न डर इन तम के घरों से
है अगर हौसला तुझमें,
तो वक्त भी थम जाऐगा!

जो ओढ़ी निराशा की चादर तूने ,
तो ईश्वर भी क्या कर पाऐगा!
जो प्रकृति हो तेरी आशावादी,
तो नीम भी खा जाऐगा!

सामाजिक ढाँचा देखता है
स्वंय का ढाँचा बिगाड़कर,
पथ पर अर्गेषित रहेगा तो,
गगन भी छू जाऐगा!

समाज का सादृश्य पता है तुझे,
स्वंय का कब बनाऐगा?
बाह्य आडम्बरों की दौड़ में मत जा
अस्तित्व भी खो जाऐगा!

उठ ,जाग ,कदम बढ़ा
पहचान तभी तू पाऐगा!
ऐ मुसाफिर चला चल,
मंजिल तभी तू पाऐगा!

Pooja
BA(H)Political Science III Year

इंसानियत बची न बचा इंसान

शैवानियत बन उभरा आतंकबाद

बाम्ब ब्लास्ट,हमला,खून-खराबा

अब तो सरे आम है

क्योंकि धर्म जात-पात रंग भेद से

बंटा हुआ इंसान है

खुद ही जाने की इंसानियत

से पीछे हट जाता इंसान है

राजनीति के खोखले नियम

कानूनमें फंस,

एक जैसा होकर भी देश की

सरहदों में बंट जाता इंसान है

अपने दायरों को बढ़ाते-बढ़ाते

उजाड़ दिए कई आशियाने.......

एक धरा से होकर भी क्यों

लड़ जाता इंसान है।

Source: googleimages.com

डिजिटल इंडिया की दौड़ के झूठे वादे

Pooja
BA(H)Political Science III Year

गरीबी हटाओ, देश बचाओ

भ्रष्टाचार मिटाओ, विकास लाओ"

जैसे पार्टियों के नए नए नारे है,

लेकिन उनके एजेंडे में कोई

नए बदलाव नहीं आये है!

इनको देखते सुनते बीत गए कई बरस

लेकिन हालातो में सुधार के नहीं

मिले कोई अंश!

कदम कदम पर गरीब जरूर नज़र आएगा!

लेकिन संसद में पारित होते बजटों

या छिड़ी बहसों में इनका मुद्दा

शायद ही मिल पाएगा।

दूर दराज कस्बो में अभी भी

बिजली नहीं,लेकिन

इंडिया से डिजिटल इंडिया बनने की है,

खूब होड़ मची।

नियम कानून में इतनी सख्ती नहीं

जितनी इन्हें तोड़ने वालों की तादाद बढी!

विकास तो हो रहा है लेकिन

लेकिन अभी हम है वही खड़े!

प्रौद्योगिकी

Monika
BA(H)Political Science II Year

ऐ प्रौद्यगिकी तू जब से आई है

सूकून में भी मेरे तनहाई है,

निर्भर नहीं थी तुझपर में

निर्भरता तूने बढाई है,

ऐ प्रोद्यिगिकी तू जब से आई है।

माना दिए है तूने रोजगार कई

पर बेरोजगारी भी तूने बढाई है,

दिन का सूरज ढलता नही

रात को तू ले आई है,

ऐ प्रोद्यिगिकी जब से तू आई है।

भूल गई क्या दिन पुराने

जब तेरे बिना भी होता था काम मेरे,

क्यू इतराती है खुद पर इतना

क्योंकि मेरे द्वारा ही तू आई है,

ऐ प्रोद्यिगिकी जब से तू आई है।

Source: Google Images

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE- LEADERSHIP ROLES IN THE COLLEGE (2016-2017)

Faculty Members

Dr. Jayashree Pillai	:	Convener, Academic Committee Convener, TULA, Miranda House Consumer Club
Dr. Purnima Roy	:	Vice Principal
Dr. Bijyalaxmi Nanda	:	Convener, Women's Development Cell Chairperson, Internal Complaints Committee
Ms. Kusuma K. Subha	:	Convener, ENACTUS
Dr. Namrata Singh	:	Chief Nodal Officer, National Service Scheme
Ms. Sonali Chitalkar	:	Teacher-in-Charge, Non-Collegiate Women Education Board

Students:

Shallu	:	President, Miranda House Students' Union
Chandni Jain	:	President, Debating Society
Ishani Banerjee	:	President, Women's Development Cell
Pooja Premraj	:	President, National Service Scheme
Sushrija Sakshi Upadhayay	:	President, Snapshot, Photography Society
Jayam Singh Chauhan	:	President, TULA
Pousali Sarkar	:	Vice-President Women's Development Cell.
Sehal Jain	:	Vice President, National Service Scheme
Aanchal Manuja	:	Vice President, Debating Society
Kanupriya Mittal	:	General Secretary, Debating Society
Julie Boruah	:	General Secretary, Sports Department
Emily Ralte	:	General Secretary, North-East Society
Lisa Brahma	:	Public Relations Manager, North-East Society
Prerna Barua	:	Public Relations Manager, Debating Society

Chandni Jain
BA (H) Political Science III Year

I had participated in the Indo-Dutch exchange programme held in Utrecht, Netherlands organised from 29th June to 3rd July, 2015. I was one of the 12 students chosen to represent Miranda House at the Intensive International Program on 'International Strategic Management and Marketing' at HU Business School, Utrecht. The programme involved a two-week interaction amongst students from Miranda House and those of HU Business School. We stayed in Stretch for the duration of the programme in the local hostels. We travelled to their college every day and attended classes like regular students. We all were divided into teams of mixed students and we participated in a Marketing Simulation Game 'LINKS' in which my team was awarded the 'Best Team'. We attended seminars, formal dinners and a cultural night as well. We ended our trip with a visit to Paris.

The interaction facilitated a great deal of exchange of cultures and ideas across national boundaries. We also learnt about the difference in our education systems. The education in Europe, apparently, focussed more on gaining practical experience and work skills apart from education. The exchange programme was a great opportunity to make friends from different parts of the world, building life-long connections.

Preeti Kumari

BA (H) Political Science III Year

What is it about the English Countryside- why is the beauty so much more than visual? Why does it touch one so? The question that Dodie Smith, the famous British novelist posed in the 20th century was the same I had during my time at the University of Sussex, from 18th July to 12th of August, 2016. The beauty reached my soul, touched me, moved me, amazed and humbled me. Beginning my day at 6 am, I would spend my mornings exploring the wooden trails, vast meadows, country homes and castles all around the campus, my soul dancing in ecstasy for the beauty I was living.

I received a scholarship for the International Summer School at University of Sussex after the Principal's nomination at Miranda House. This was a scholarship offered for one Miranda House student because of a collaboration between the two Institutions. My module on 'Health in a Global Perspective' was an enriching course I thoroughly enjoyed. Dynamically rooted in the social sciences, the course challenged my existing world view. A diverse class of seven people, representing five countries including Brazil, USA, Germany, Denmark and India, we were all on a wonderful theoretical trip navigating continents. The importance of local health systems and the intricate relationship between Politics and Health were two central themes that evolved from the course. My tutor, Stephen Roberts was a dynamic, young educator who would ensure his classes were grand theatres of pure learning. Gifting him a little bronze statue of Buddha while leaving, I was extremely grateful for he broadened the horizons of my thinking in unthinkable ways. It is both amazing and unusual to be in a space where one could learn extensively and build wonderful relations for a lifetime.

Through the many conversations with strangers, about each other's cultures, we got used to living in a foreign country and those strangers soon became friends. I understood the importance of International exposure during undergraduate studies. Like a teacher once said, one of the most important aspects of such an experience is that you get to know. You know what world class Universities are doing, you know education systems abroad, you know about different cultures, you know what it is to live in a foreign place, you know about how wonderful and essential it is to learn from each other, as peoples, and as nations.

In my attempt to 'truly belong to the University' I participated in all the ongoing research projects and other activities on Campus. That fetched me little money which I used to buy gifts for my friends and family. I have learnt a lot from the University and also left a part of me behind. My time at the University of Sussex has been one of those fine experiences I craved for as an undergraduate student to learn and grow by leaps and bounds, both academically and personally. I would encourage all my friends to keep an eye for opportunities such as these and place no limits to all that you can learn and achieve.

Ambi

BA (H) Political Science II Year

The Indo-Dutch Collaborative Programme, a joint initiative by the prestigious institutions Miranda House, Shri Ram College of Commerce and Utrecht Business School saw its 9th year in 2017. The theme of the Programme focused on "Sustainability: Envisioning the 3P's – Profits, People and Planet". It was conducted in the campus premises of Miranda House and Shri Ram College from 27th January – 4th February 2017. The prime motive of the Programme was to create awareness on business sustainability and subsequently stress on cultural exposure and exchange. Twelve students represented Utrecht Business School, fifteen from SRCC, eighteen students from Miranda House participated in the Programme. UBS was also represented by two faculty members Prof. Annette Ammeraal and Prof. Sarah De Bakker who took in charge of formulating the week's project-work.

The Programme was divided in a day wise schedule – two broad assignments were given to the participants, one which focused on analysing the green behaviour of the students and employees and the other focused on surveying any industry sector on the issue of awareness and sustainability measures undertaken. Student panel discussions also took place along with engagement of imminent guests on the central theme of the Programme. The group also went on a city tour starting from the Netherland Embassy, and Gandhi Udyog Bhawan to Chandni Chowk and Delhi Haat. For me, taking part in this esteemed Programme was life changing. It was enriching in academics as I studied the nitty-gritty of research and analysis. Working with students from Netherlands also in infused in me, a different kind of vitality and created bonds that will last for a long time. We all were united by a common purpose which was engaging in environment issues which are of paramount importance in present time.

Tarini Gupta
BA (H) Political Science II Year

The two week stay for the summer school at LSE will always remain etched in my heart as one of my fondest memories. It gave me an inimitable opportunity to explore the world with like-minded people but from diverse backgrounds. LSE became a home away from home in a very short span of time and I was fortunate enough to learn and explore my own capacities and capabilities of being an independent individual. The life lessons that I learned have enabled me to have a better understanding of the world and its nuances. It has helped me appreciate the freedom that I enjoy and many are deprived of. The course content gave me a broadened view of the simple word – 'Rights' and the dichotomy that exists between theory and practice. I was able to get an insight about how rights and duties are inextricably interlinked and interdependent. I have always believed that freedom is the most precious possession and researching about it has brought to the fore the grim reality of the deprived society that we live in.

There are many things that make us similar to other people but, we also form our own identities by noticing the differences between us and others. Therefore, I was able to compare the situation in India and Britain with regards to Human Rights - Theory, Law, and Practice. Just like India, Britain is a diverse society, comprising of myriad communities that co-exist in perfect harmony. But what resonated with me the most, in the brief stay, was how every human being is respected and valued in the society and no one takes their freedom and rights for granted.

The experience that I gathered is inexplicable and I earnestly believe that joining the summer school was my best decision. I am left with a clearer understanding of the pulse of the society that we live in and would advocate all of us to manifest the true spirit of human rights through its practices, behaviour, and attitudes. Living on my own, making decisions that had immediate effect on my day to day functioning, managing my finances and discerning the right from the wrong, choosing friends in a new place prudently, all this has collaborated into making me a learner for life who appreciates and values the diversity present in the global society with open mindedness. To sum it up, I am reminded of the famous and often quoted lines of Robert Ingersoll – "Give to every human being every right that you claim for yourself."

"MIRANDA SPEAKS"

JALLIKATTU

"The talk on animal rights is justified but to interfere with someone's culture is not. It shouldn't be banned."
Samiksha Bhiduri (BA H. Political Science, II yr)

"They justify the practice in the name of culture and tradition but there are many other good practices in the Sangama literature, why aren't those followed ?"
Supriya Verma (BA H. Political Science, II yr)

"Jallikattu shouldn't be banned as it does not harm the animal or the humans involved. The bull is not an endangered species instead its survival owes to the sport."
Jahnavi (BA Prog, I yr)

DEMONETISATION

"The policy was a boon and a bane depending what strata of the society one belongs to. If we say that it is a boon in the long run , the decision makers missed out on the immediate repercussions that hit the lower strata of the society the hardest."
Arshveer Kaur (BA Prog, II yr)

"The move could have been better had the government taken it slow. It was ill-planned as a result it backfired. Implementation was a problem."
Ankita Mathur (B.Sc H. Physics, I yr)

"It is all power politics. It started off as a fight against corruptio. When the government realised that they couldn't achieve it, they shifted the focus to a 'cashless society'."
Tarika Sanduja (BA H. History, II yr)

NATIONALISM

"It is an ideology to hold the citizens together but the way it is being defined today, with all the sloganeering, isn't right. I, coming from a north eastern state who looks different, feel like an outside here. Isn't nationalism supposed to be inclusive of all ?"
Rajshree Rai (BA H. History, II yr)

"No one has the right to decide whether I am a nationalist or not. It is for me to decide if I want to say ' Bharat Mata ki Jai' or not."
Supriya Verma (BA H. Political science, II yr)

"We need to stop accepting the dominant group's definition of the nation. Exclusivist notions are anti-national, whether it is exclusion on the basis of gender, caste or class."
Ishani Banerjee (BA H. Political Science, III yr)

"It doesn't make sense to pay tribute to the nation by standing up during the national anthem after or before a movie. This is not how nationalism or patriotism is determined."
Stanzin Zomskit (BA H. Political Science, II yr

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"There is no such thing as 'unnatural, the only thing that matters is the consent of the actors performing the act. The religion or the state can't do anything about it."
Subhadra Goyal (BA H. History, II yr)

"It is obsolete, not scientific at all and a remnant of our colonial past. Our colonisers have long ago done away with this law. What the law terms as 'unnatural' seems to be very natural in animals as well as humans."
Mridul Pawar (BA Prog, I yr)
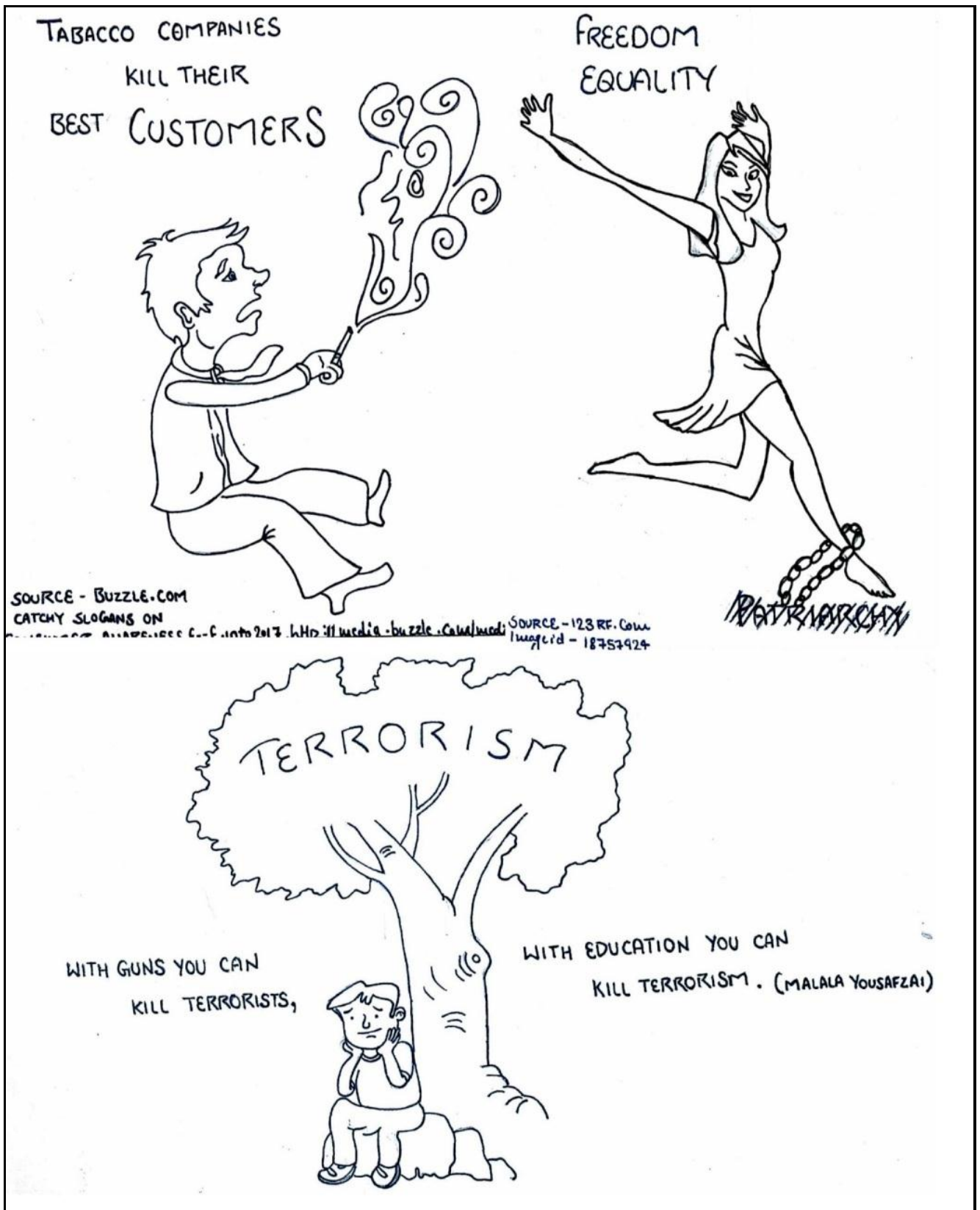
Illustrations by Madhubala: BA(H) Political Science II Year

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