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# THE DISCUSSANT

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## MIGRATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

About two decades ago, as reporters covering the crime beat, we had gone to the office of the Deputy Commissioner of Police of North-East Delhi district, which was then located on old GT Road inside Seelampur police station complex. The Metro station, which is now located across the road, did not then exist.

North-East district in those days was considered the city's underbelly. Sharing his challenges of policing the volatile district under him, the DCP had said that there were certain pockets where beat policing was not possible. According to him, those areas were so deeply entrenched with the anti-social elements that a cop feared to venture out there.

The officer had said that the police had devised a strategy of group patrolling in those areas - a gypsy with a section of cops and few other policemen on half-a-dozen odd motorbikes took rounds of the area to "instil a fear of the law." North-East district in those days remained least visited till the Delhi Metro brought first signs of development in this back alley.

Talking of slums, I am reminded of another situation - a rather hilarious one. There was to be a slum camp in Kusumpur Pahadi in South-West district close to VasantVihar. During one of the demolition drives, the Pahadi residents were shifted to a rehabilitation colony quite far away. I recall a reporter coming with an amusing story the very next day. The bungalows in VasantVihar went without cleaning and stoves in the kitchens did not burn as all the maids and cooks had been carted away in the demolition drive.

Coming to the lynching of Dr.PankajNarang earlier this month, the issue of social and economic conflict has once again been illustrated. Though an attempt has been made to give a communal colour to the incident both by the right-wing forces for getting hyper over the religion of the accused, and a vigilant media by underplaying the case. It should not be forgotten that the incident is yet another illustration of prevailing conflict in our society.

Delhi remains the El Dorado for several of us. And in seeking our fortune we are often overcome with frustration. Like in American playwright Arthur Miller's Pulitzer-winning play "Death of Salesman", every character in the dentist lynching case must have had their own dreams, and thus, their frustrations too. The American dream was seen as the theme of Miller's play. The American Dream, going by simple interpretation, means equal opportunity for everyone to prosper.

The large numbers of migrants coming to Delhi come to the megapolis with a dream quite similar to the American dream. Leara D Rhodes, who teaches Journalism at the University of Georgia, makes

an interesting interpretation of the American Dream, which can also be replicated in the Indian context. In her book "The Ethnic Press: Shaping the American Dream" (Peter Lang Publishing; 2010), Rhodes says, "The Dream includes the opportunity for one's children to grow up and receive a good education and career without artificial barriers. It is the opportunity to make individual choices without the prior restrictions."

We have slums inhabited by school dropouts taking to various vocations, not necessarily crime, in search of quick prosperity. When we have young minds in plenty, not properly mentored or educated but looking for prosperity, we also have frustrated souls in equal numbers. Without condoning the crime committed in Vikaspuri, we would have to concede that such frustrated young minds lead to the situations of conflict, mostly social.

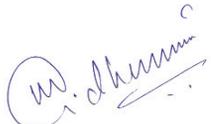
A few years back a rough driving taxi had scraped past my vehicle, with my driver just about managing to avoid a crash. We overtook the taxi, brought it to a halt and were taking the driver to task when suddenly a crowd emerged from nowhere in defence of the driver. In fact, we were held hostage before a police van came to rescue us. As I wondered where the crowd came from, my driver pointed to a slum nearby. I was not amazed at the aggression of the slum dwellers but the fellowship of the poor.

The big question facing the society is how to control this social conflict and anger in the slums. Certainly not by subsidising the water and power supplies with an eye for easy electoral harvests. The successive governments in the national Capital have followed a flawed policy towards the rehabilitation of these slums. The focus of the policy so far has been to shift people with their habitat from a prime location to a less prime site. Thereafter pamper them with subsidies and create a vote bank.

Such policies have only added to social conflict. Whenever such shoves have come, the biggest casualties have been children who are forced to drop out of their schools. So do we let the slums remain and add to the metropolitan misery? Not the least. The policies should be such that people on their volition move out of the slums leaving these ghettos deserted. Such social empowerment would not come through policies of subsidy but a push to development.

A case in point is Delhi Metro. It has acted as an engine of development. Wherever it has gone it has created social and economic energy. Thanks to the Delhi Metro, Seelampur and Welcome are no more distant god-forsaken colonies. A lot of business activity is visible in the area. Police records could vouch for the shrunken crime graph. The Vikaspuri incident was not about the death of just a dentist but death of several dreams and birth of many more frustrated minds.

31 March 2016

  
Sidharth Mishra

# secretary's desk

**W**e have begun the New Year at the Centre for Reforms, Development and Justice on a good note with the Centre president, self and other members of the Centre taking up academic activities in the right earnest participating seminars and deliberations of national importance.

CRDJ was represented during this quarter at seminars on foreign policy, democracy, human rights, social harmony and sustainable development, where we presented our points of view and also gladly received suggestions from others. We have reproduced one of the lectures delivered by Prof Ashok Modak at Maharaja Agrasen College, Delhi University in this issue.

In April this year CRDJ in association with Dr Ambedkar Foundation, Shaheed Bhagat Singh (Eve) College and Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) is organizing a seminar on Dr BR Ambedkar's Timeless Legacy. We are looking forward to valuable deliberations and also dedicate our next edition to this seminar.

It gives me great pride to present before you the January-March 2016 issue of The Discussant. This is the first issue of fourth volume. Thus we have successfully entered the fourth year of regular publication as an RNI registered quarterly periodical. We had received the ISSN accreditation a year earlier.

In this time and era when publication industry is increasingly coming to be controlled by corporate bodies, I reiterate, it's no mean achievement for a think tank, still trying to get a toehold to have managed to publish the journal regularly. In these times, The Discussant has come to be recognized as journal of honest endeavour.

I am happy to share with you that our online edition is crossing new frontiers and getting accessed from new territories, which gives our writers a global exposure unthinkable for any journal of our vintage.

With Warm Regards,

31 March 2016



Dr Sanjeev Kumar Tiwari

# CONGRESS-LEFT ALLIANCE IN WEST BENGAL: A LATE VINDICATION OF SAIFUDDIN'S THESIS OF NEED FOR SECULAR UNITY

**PROF SUBRATA MUKHERJEE\***



Late Marxist Leader Saifuddin Choudhary

The recent striking development leading to the emergence of an alliance between the Congress and the CPI (M) led left front in West Bengal to fight the legislative assembly elections 2016 against Mamata Bannerjee's Trinamool Congress can be traced back to the split in the united Communist Party in the wake of Indo-China war and the establishment of the CPI(M) in 1964, and the latter shifting its head office from Kolkata to New Delhi, with the intention of playing a bigger role in national politics. Till the early 1990s, the Congress continued to be a major player. Understandably for the CPI (M) the major opponent was the Congress. However, in the 1990s, the Congress declined and in the post Rajiv Gandhi period there was a slow but a definite trend with the rise of the BJP as the major challenger to the Congress.

In this altered situation after the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992, in a situation of an increasingly weakened Congress, the need for an alliance with the Congress was proposed by the late Shri. Saifuddin Choudhary (1952-2014), four times Member of Parliament. Raising the question of functioning of the party within a parliamentary democratic system, he found the entire idea of democratic centralism incompatible and that the party must

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**CONGRESS-LEFT ALLIANCE IN WEST BENGAL:  
A LATE VINDICATION OF SAIFFUDIN'S THESIS OF NEED FOR SECULAR UNITY**

become people centric. He perceived that with the rise of communal forces, unity of secular is the utmost need. Power for him was secondary. He pleaded for an alliance between the party and the Congress party, as he argued that the Congress had many faults but none could question its secular credentials. He put this argument at the 1995 Chandigarh Party Congress of the CPI (M) was removed as a member of the Central Committee. This was an unprecedented example of exit of a young parliamentarian for purely political reasons. Ultimately, he left the party, unable to convince his party that the most serious threat to the nation, came from authoritarianism and communalism, and in this fight any sectarian or extremist stand weakens this grim situation which called for a united fight with the Congress. He was denied a ticket in 1996. The final act was in 2000 when his membership was cancelled and as a result, he started the PDS. But he continued to be a Marxist till the end. His criticism of CPM was that it continued to be a Stalinist party with total lack of inner party democracy. His major thesis was that a weakened Congress had made it possible for a stronger left secular alternative as a major national alternative. He was critical of the idea of the Third Front as taking on both the BJP and the Congress would be counterproductive as it would consolidate the BJP which according to him was not secular. His opinion was a negation of the party line, but he argued, as it concerned the entire society at large, it should be considered seriously. A centralized decision making might have been relevant one hundred years ago but was no longer relevant in this age of democracy. Reminding of the collapse of communism in Europe, he pointed out that security of food and lodging was not enough as people demand freedom, liberty and pluralism which were absent in the erstwhile socialist countries. His revolt against the Leninist line of democratic centralism was very similar to Eduard Bernstein's critique of orthodox Marxism in the 1890s when he said that the dictatorship of the proletariat was a doctrine inappropriate in this age of democracy. Martov had a similar opinion after Lenin seized of power.

Saiffudin was conscious of the declining support base of the left in a situation where Lenin's doctrine of revolutionary seizure of power was not possible and the only alternative is to work towards a democratic revolution. He pointed out that in the well-established democratic environment for any meaningful political discourse it was necessary to accommodate the widest section of people as the basis of an orderly change. He reminded us that old thinking of socialism was not relevant even in the recent past as old ideas like dictatorship of proletariat, command system of economy and rigid structure of economic organization had no relevance in today's world. He quoted Tagore who warned in the early 1930s that the rigid socialist system would not survive. Any political doctrine which aimed at narrowing or restricting democracy cannot survive in an age of ever expanding horizons of democracy.

It is an irony of history, that when both the CPM and the Congress leaders are proclaiming that their cooperation was forced by the people themselves in West Bengal, they forget the name of Saiffudin, who had the foresight to envisage this broad unity. If the leadership of both the parties had the foresight of Saiffudin, the contemporary political map of India would have been very different. Saiffudin during his life time remained a prophet outcast but today both the outfits are realising that this unity is what people desire.

# INDIA'S RELATION WITH CENTRAL ASIA: PRESENT RELEVANCE

PROF. ASHOK MODAK\*

India's relation with Central Asia is quite relevant and significant at this juncture since its period of completion of twenty five years of initiation of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation process in India. It is also a coincidence that the year 2016 is the silver jubilee year of emergence of Central Asian states as independent sovereign entities. The year 2016 will, in short inform us of the stark reality that it was in 1991 that India as well as Central Asian countries began their enthusiastic and energetic expeditions towards new directions.

Anybody who undertakes a review of various events unfolded during these twenty five years in India and Central Asia is bound to notice the impact of such expeditions on the relations between the two areas. During these years, if India has acquired certain standing and status in the arena of economic development; Central Asian states have also obtained relative stability and confidence. These very years have witnessed the emergence of India as a giver of valuable assistance to Central Asian states. It is quite likely that India will succeed in the near future in attracting these states which have, incidentally become eager to diversify sources of assistance and also the destination of their exports. We all know that the ethnic problems which cropped up in all Central Asian republics in the immediate aftermath of their rise as independent entities became explosively complicated after the demolition of the New York twin towers. Each Central Asian state therefore tried its best to insulate itself from the spread of fundamentalism and terrorism. It appears that each state found due solace in pre-Islamic traditions of the Central Asian region.

It was in fact the solace in such pre-Islamic traditions which enabled the Central Asian states to offer new interpretation to the five pillars of Islam reflected in five ritual actions such as Shahada (Profession of Faith), Namaz (Ritual Prayer), Zakat (Charity), Rosa (Fast) and Hajj (Pilgrimage to Mecca). Central Asian states have indeed pursued

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in post-soviet years typical local Muslimness shaped by their national ancestors and such a pursuit seems to have brought them relatively closer to India. Realisation on the part of Central Asians that the traditions of multi-culturalism and mutual tolerance have taken deep roots in India has undoubtedly created a conducive setting for further cementing of relationships between Central Asia and India. We cannot ignore in this context that the signing of the Iran-Deal between Iran and the five plus one big powerful nations of the world, as it has assured India of the strengthening of bonds with Central Asia through the landscape of Iran! Five happenings which have occurred in India and in Central Asia as well during post-soviet years are thus quite crucial for analysing India's relations with Central Asia. They are as follows :- 1) India's readiness to take off in the arena of economic development , 2) India's projection as a giver of valuable assistance to Central Asian states , 3) Central Asia's inclination to diversify sources of assistance and terminals of destination for its exports, 4) Proclivity on the part of Central Asian states to opt for new interpretation of Islamic rituals , compatible with Indian culture and 5) The signing of the Iran-Deal in the recent past . Some elaboration of each happening is "a must" in the draft of the present paper.

### **INDIA'S READINESS TO TAKE OFF**

I have stated about that India has started in 1991 its march to implement liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation (LPG trends) that it has succeeded within 25 years post 1991 in reaching the take off stage in the field of economic development has also been mentioned in the lines above. One can substantiate this observation by referring to the appreciation showered by Christine Lagarde, the IMF managing director through her speech in New Delhi in March 2015 on India's unique achievements in economic development. She has not only articulated her appreciation by calling India as a "bright spot on a cloudy horizon" but also gone beyond using such flowery words as she predicted in New Delhi speech that she would personally invest her money in India. The editorial comment by Times of India in this connection is worth quoting here: - "with its young demography, huge market size and managerial prowess India has for years been thought of as ready for take-off." Subsequently in September 2015 it was Bill Gates, Microsoft founder and philanthropist who endorsed this appreciative comment through the following statement: - "India is a great example of progress that has been made. In 1990, 3.3 million children died before their fifth birth day. Last year that number was down to just over 1.3 million... India's record on maternal health is just as strong. The maternal mortality rate is down by 62%." Latest admiration of Indian economy articulated by Larry Summer former secretary of American treasury and former director of National Economy Council in December 2015 is equally quotable here: -"India seems to have potential to be the pride of the BRICS, particularly because of the period of rising anxiety economically and geographically with effect to china which creates a sense that this is India's moment". With such grand achievements at command not only in terms of GDP growth, but also in those of certain human indices India must have impressed Central Asian states which have marched during these years from dilapidated socialism to unknown capitalism. It was the speech delivered by Kazakh President Nazarbayev during one of the recent visits to New Delhi which reflected the clear proof of the impact of India's progress on Kazakhstan. Nazarbayev thus stated: - "We see the growth of the India and we have full appreciation for the opportunities the growth of India presents to the world and to our part of world." If Nazarbayev, the captain of top most economy of Central Asia rushes to admit that the growth of India presents opportunities to us," Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan (the poorest among the Central Asian Republic) is bound to be tempted to elevate bilateral relationship between Tajikistan and India to the level of a strategic partnership. Kyrgyzstan, another less developed state of Central Asia cannot remain unimpressed by India's economic progress, when it wants to reconstruct its economy. If fragile Tajik economy, lacking in technical expertise and Turkmenian economy, eager to develop small scale medium industries are eager to follow India's example, Uzbekistan also wants to sign many more joint ventures with India in several sectors.

## **INDIA'S IMAGE OF A GIVER OF VALUABLE ASSISTANCE**

The fact that India has carved out a niche for itself as a giver of valuable assistance to Central Asian states since their rise as independent, sovereign entities is duly recognised by several scholars and thinkers. Amiya Chandra has thus stated that India's narration of Central Asia as its 'distant neighbourhood' is the apt or pithy condensation of the ideal of one world where development in one part of the world invariably impact on the other though obliquely. He rightly calls such a narration as the timely articulation, compatible with modern era of the ancient Vedic ideal "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" which signifies the whole world as one big family. That being the basic consideration, India's relation with Central Asia has acquired very laudable peculiar dimensions. Ambassador Phunchuk Stobdan invites attention here to two dimensions: A) India has presented itself to the Central Asian region as a partner, rather than a mere contender for the region's vast oil and gas resources. Ambassador Stobdan's comment in substantiation of the just mentioned dimension runs as follows. "We have shared our experiences and expertise, built capacity and focused through our ITEC (that is India's Technical and Economic Cooperation) and other assistant programmes." B) India has never been prescriptive in its political approach. Unlike the USA which insists that its aid recipient must pursue westernized democratic policies and practice as well as unlike Russia which cannot stand for aid recipient's friendship with the USA and unlike China which is eager to establish its hegemony over Central Asia, India is uninterested in a quid-pro-quo gain from the aid recipient. One may state that it is the translation of India's civilisation bonds with Central Asian states into warm and friendly relations that is evidenced in the just-referred dimensions of these relations. India's assistance for renovating a soviet-built airfield at Ayni, in Tajikistan equally mirrors "karmayoga"(assistance without expectations of quid-pro-quo gain) as New Delhi refused to use this airfield-facility as its first ever foreign military base and handed over the airfield to the Tajik defence ministry in 2010.

## **CENTRAL ASIAN INCLINATION TO DIVERSIFY**

Since inception, Central Asian states have been trapped in the vortex moves and counter moves on the part of global as well as regional powers. The geographical location of the Central Asian states as well as stocks of hydrocarbons at their command tempts all these powers towards Central Asia. Last twenty five years have therefore witnessed in the five states of Central Asia a noteworthy race among powers to snatch from their maximum possible portions of hydrocarbons such a race or a rivalry has acquired the name "a new version of the 19th century Great Game between Great Britain and Russia". As the five states (predominately populated by Muslims) which have become independent and sovereign after the demolition of USSR in 1991 happen to be geographically close to China, Russia, West Asia and South Asia, entire world takes interest in Central Asia. Least wonder, apart from Russia, China, Iran, Turkey, Pakistan and India, distant nations like the USA have also rushed there to consolidate their positions in the field. All the nations (barring India) in general and certain powers in particular indulge in exclusive practices in the sense that they can't endure any elbow room occupation by anybody else. Such a stance on the part of a foreign nation does generate suspicion in Central Asian states. Central Asian's inclination to diversity sources of assistance and terminals of destinations for their exports is thus natural and legitimate! Smooth transformations undergone by all Central Asian states during the last two and half decades and the resultant stability enjoyed by them have made them confident to search new sources and destinations! Realization seems to have dawned on Central Asian states that compared to other nations India is distinct, in the sense that they are not pressurized by the latter to disconnect ties with other competitors. Central Asian states must have also grasped that India's interest while dealing with them is broad based, that India does not want to confine itself merely to get access to resources! Central Asian regimes must have concluded by this time that as against the competitive political interests and prescriptive political approaches of regional and global players, India's peaceful and cooperative approach towards them is quite appreciative and that is

why, India's relationship with them has emerged as a balancing factor. India's relationship with each Central Asian state has acquired in post-Soviet years a unique distinctness can be elaborated by referring to some concrete evidences. Story of the relationship between India and Kazakhstan thus inform us of the emphasis accorded by both of them on the mutuality of their concerns on various issues. Several business houses and corporations of the two countries have implemented in Kazakhstan a number of joint projects which have facilitated India-Kazakhstan cooperation in the field such as Solar Energy, Healthcare, Agri-business, Tourism and so on. It was India's disbursement of US \$5 million to Kyrgyzstan in 1995 that laid the foundation of remarkable Indo-Kyrgyz joint ventures in industries. Subsequently, India not only granted additional US \$2 million for setting up a minihydel station in Kyrgyzstan but also offered valuable technical assistance for furthering human resource development there. Tajikistan is not only closest of all the five Central Asian states to India, but also located on the border of Afghanistan. India has therefore given due assistance to Dushambe and such assistance, incidentally, proved quite beneficial for transforming the profile of the Tajik economy, the poorest among all Central Asian economies! As for India's assistance to Turkmenistan in oil and gas sectors, the comment made by Turkmen President Niyazov is quotable here:- "Participation of large Indian companies and enterprises in the realisation of oil gas projects in the territory of Turkmenistan will serve for two countries' benefits." What is noteworthy in this connection is the fact that the proposed TAPI project will prove beneficial to four countries: Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India! Our Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has rightly called "TAPI" as the most significant initiative in our relationship, as "it will transform regional economic cooperation and bring prosperity along the route". "Elaboration of evidences for substantiating uniqueness of India's relationship with Central Asian region will remain incomplete if we omit the ITEC programme (Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Programme) that has become immensely popular in Uzbekistan. India has allocated 150 slots under the ITEC programme to Uzbekistan and from the view point of Amiya Chandra, "this is the highest number off ITEC slots allocated to any country."

### **PROCLIVITY ON THE PART OF CENTRAL ASIAN STATES TO OPT FOR NEW INTERPRETATION OF ISLAMIC RITUALS**

Whoever decides to analyse crucial happenings in Central Asia during the last twenty five years, invariably notes that Central Asian states have opted for unique liberal and appreciable interpretation of Islamic principles and practices. Such interpretations do deserve a specific space in the present paper because they have carved out a setting befitting for the further flowering of relations between India and Central Asia.

Sudden emergence of five Asian states at the cost of the USSR in 1991 created an ideological vacuum in Central Asia. Islam Karimov, the President of Uzbekistan referred to this phenomenon in the following manner. "We freed ourselves from the Soviet communist ideology. But what filled the vacuum left behind?" Different radical religious groups some not always peaceful started to make their presence felt in the region....Hisb-ut-Tahrir put down its deep roots in Central Asia and Uzbekistan, in particular in the Ferghama valley.

The fact that several regional and external players began to dominate the just mentioned strategic vacuum in the land mass of Central Asia in the immediate post-soviet years is a matter of consensus. Newly emerged five states happened to be inexperienced in the field of foreign relations, as they were mere constituent republics of the USSR for around seven decades. The resultant chaos got compounded by the resurgence of Islam. We all know it well that during Soviet years, although citizens were prevented from attending official Islamic institutions, all of them or at least most of them had led their lives under the impact of Islam! Implementation of the policy of Glasnost (openness) during Gorbachev - years of the evening of the Soviet Union gave a boost to the people to pursue openly the Islamic practices and the emergence and formation of independent and sovereign five Central Asian states in 1991 prompted these entities to call themselves Islamic states. Soon there emerged various radical organisations: Islamic Rebirth

party, Islamic Renaissance party, Adolat, Hizb-ut-Tahrir and so on. They not only launched campaign against corruption, criminality and other practices mirroring morals deterioration, but also imposed on people sharia, insisted on females the custom of wearing hizab etc. "Adolat" in Uzbekistan actually engaged itself in the ousting of Islam Karimov from the seat of power. One must mention in this context that the former half of the 1990s, it was the rampant spread of Wahabism which threatened established system. Central Asian states then faced a unique dilemma. They were prone to declare themselves as Islamic; they wanted to underscore the Islamic core of their national heritage. They however realised that they could not afford to support fanatic and extremist postures of Wahabism. They wanted to restore Islam which was sunk into oblivion during soviet years. They simultaneously wanted to distance themselves from the "Wahabism" as it caused existential threat to them! Offering of new interpretations to Islamic principles and practices was therefore considered as the best way out!

It was the post-soviet search on the part of the Central Asian states to find out their roots in the hoary past with a view to establishing their ancient natural identities that enabled them to offer intelligent interpretation of the Islam. Such a search was initiated by each President of the respective states in Central Asia. Islam Karimov, the president of Uzbekistan thus presented Bahouddin Naqshband, the Uzbek hero as the sponsor of Uzbeki Muslimness, Noorsultan Nazarbayev, the Kazakh President informed the world that the Muslimness in Kazakhstan relies on commemorating the teachings of Ahmed Yassaviv. And Rakhmon, the President of Tajikistan tried to shape Tajiki Muslimness on the basis of Aryan civilization, Akayev, former President of Kyrgyzstan informed the world the Manas, the mythic hero of Kyrgyzstan inspires him to build the Kyrgyz nation and to interpret Islam in the unique way!" All Central Asian states thus emphatically point out that the nation to which they belong have risen the pre-Islamic era and still continue to provide inspiration to them. Arpita Basu Roy perhaps refers to Central Asians' pride in the pre-Islamic past when she underscores that citizens in post-soviet Central Asia live in a completely different conceptual space than their co-ethnics in Afghanistan. Her articulation is quotable here - "Although , Islam's role in post-soviet Central Asian states is much greater than it was under the Soviets, it does not have the central cultural role it does in Afghanistan." Anita Sengupta vents the same viewpoint in a more explicit manner. According to Anita, when Central Asians faced global radical challenges in the post- independence period, they began to emphasise several pre Islamic traditions of the region. Least wonder, the political rhetoric of Islamic revival (mirroring pre-Islamic traditions) does emphasize multifarious traditions of faith; it does not, in other words emphasize on the structures of an Islam.

State governments of Central Asia seems to have realised that the co-optation of Sufism in nation building would be the best possible antidote to the impact of violent, terrorist activities undertaken in the name of Islam. If Naqshbandiya-teaching has thus received blessings in Uzbekistan, the teaching of Yassaviv Sufi order has been sanctioned in Kazakhstan. Central Asian state governments have accordingly become advocates of secular, tolerant, humanistic and nationalist interpretations of Islamic rituals. They have, in other words opted for new versions of Sufism which (according to orthodox perspective) people to be ascetic, passive in day to day lives. Pnina Werbner , a research scholar has however stated the Sufism-order thus contain elements like Calvinism and Protestantism and that is why , one can say that Sufism supports this-worldly orientations towards individual achievements and autonomy. She thus endorses the government sponsored viewpoint that the Muslimness which is based on Sufism respect labour, values time and appreciate honest activity. One can similarly endorse the current Central Asian interpretation of the motto: 'The heart with God and the hand of work', attributed to Bahouddin Naqshband, a renowned Sufi saint from Uzbekistan. The interpretation prevalent in Central Asia asks people to be honest, industrious and thrifty in the light of the above mentioned Sufi motto. As per post-soviet Central Asians, Muslimness means pursuit of ethical, socially beneficial norms in all transactions. Muslimness, logically opposes shady, selfish and anti-social activities. That it opposes violent, anti-national activities and extra-territorial tendencies is equally

obvious. Maria Elizabeth Louw, an anthropologist from Denmark, whose intensive research work has thrown significant light on the present Islamic practices in the post-soviet Central Asia has made valuable observations:-1) Central Asian elites favour home-grown Islamic which is inseparable from national values.2) They downplay the importance of practicing five pillars of Islam in comparison with the much more essential effort to keep God in the heart while striving to make a living through honest work. She has also pointed out that Central Asians consider Nafsh-jihad as more important than jihad, because it asks Muslims to tame lower human instincts through repetitive invocations of the name of God. She points out moreover that journey in the homeland (one of the 11 basic principles of Nakshbandiyya teaching) which prompts a human being to travel within himself with a view to cleansing his morals is preferable to the ordinary visit to Mecca.

The Sufism-order that has taken roots in the post-soviet Central Asia has inspired elites there to interpret Islamic rituals; the pillars of Islam in a new way. As per this interpretation, the profession of faith, the first pillar of Islam asks Muslims to profess their faith, but to keep themselves away from proselytizing others, because we do not say that other ways of life are bad; 'they served their own time'.....Such an interpretation reminds us of our Vedic conviction that truth is one and it is articulated differently by different stages. As for the pursuit of other rituals such as namaz and Roza, Central Asians are invoked at present to get concentrated inwardly on God while being immersed outwardly in the transactions and relationships that sustain Muslim society. Here we remember quite spontaneously the sentence from Yogawasishta which runs as follow:-Antahastyagi; bahihhangi LokE Vihar Raghav :"( O, Raghav, pursue internal abstinence and external indulgence while dealing with people.)" If 'Hajj', as per the view point of classical Islam underscores the significance of pilgrimage to Mecca, the teachings of Nakshbandiyya interprets this pillar of Islam as 'journey in the homeland'. This teaching actually gives priority to such a journey over visit to Mecca! This interpretation as well as the Sufi-guidance to everybody to tame lower human instincts (nafz) are quite close to the Indian imperative to all to overcome lower human tendencies such as avarice, greed, anger, insolence etc.

Present proclivity on the part of the Central Asians to offer new interpretations (compatible with the modern times) of Islamic rituals and principles has, no doubt opened the doors wide open to further consolidation of relations between India and Central Asia. Incidentally, or as a matter of co-incidence, present BJP government of India seems to have opted for 'Dargah diplomacy', whereby the ideology of Sufism is sponsored officially on the basis of conviction that the Sufi tradition is the best antidote to terrorism and extremism in the sub-continent. It seems that Narendra Modi and Nawaz Sharif as well are inclined to sustain accident-prone peace process between India and Pakistan. Proneness on the part of state government in Central Asia to favour appreciable interpretations of Islamic rituals and similar inclinations on the part of the major governments in south Asia thus inform us of good omens of the future trends in relation between Central Asia and South Asia as a whole!

## **SIGNING OF THE IRAN DEAL**

Recent signing of the Iran nuclear deal between Iran on the one hand and 5+1 big powers on the other is also a very important event, as it has offered India and Central Asia good opportunities for strengthening bonds between them. President Pranab Mukherjee has underscored the significance of this event while inaugurating the conference on cooperative development, peace and security in South and Central Asia at Centre for Research in Rural and Industrial Development in Chandigarh on 30th September 2015. President Mukherjee's comment runs as follow: "We must remain cognizant that our ties have been the closest and mutually beneficial only when we had established routes of connectivity with each other. In this regard we must make full use of opportunities offered by the recent Iranian nuclear deal which opens possibilities of establishing connectivity with the region through development of Chabahar port in Iran." (Emphasis added.)

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Iran deal has freed Iran from several cumbersome sanctions imposed by the six Iran-specific Security Council resolutions. It has also exempted Tehran from additional sanction levied by the U.S., the European Union and some others. Iran has thus become more globally integrated and stronger in the post-sanction months. From India's perspectives, Iran which enjoys a crucial, geo strategic location has accordingly emerged as a valuable asset. As president Mukherjee has rightly mentioned India has got a golden chance in the present circumstances to strengthen its connectivity with Iran and with Russia and Central Asia through Iran. India has already indicated that it is interested in consolidating its links with Afghanistan through Iran, through its investment of 85 million American dollars for equipping berths in Chabahar port of Iran. India can moreover reactivate in the present times a shorter, cheaper and quicker route to Central Asia through Iran. This route, known as the international North South Transport Corridor (INSTC) was agreed upon by Iran, India and Russia in 2002 and got further endorsed by India's connect Central Asia policy in 2012 . India, Iran and Russia, the original signatories of the INSTC convection were subsequently joined by nine more countries. India can thus strengthen its relation with additional nine countries via Iran. Iran itself is one of the largest sources of oil and natural gas. Besides this, it facilitates the linkage between Central Asian sources and Indian consumers. Iran's role in India's energy security is thus quite crucial.

Iranian nuclear deal also happens to be the epitome of win-win or positive sum game. It has proved beneficial to Iran as well as to six big powers at the same time it has for instance , enabled Iran not only to get access to more than 100 billion American dollars , frozen in overseas assets , but also to emerge as a power in a region frozen in antagonism since 1979. The Iranian nuclear deal has similarly enabled six big powers to restrain Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons in the foreseeable future. The Iran Deal indeed presents itself as a model for India which is expected to play a positive sum game with Pakistan and also with Arab-gulf countries and Israel as they are adversaries of Iran. What is badly needed is diplomatic dexterity and as India has shown its ability in this field the future of relations between South Asia and Central Asia seems to be bright!

The fact that India has acquired a full membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) in 2015 adds to the crucial events most relevant for India-Central Asia relations. The SCO, which came into existence in 1996 as Shanghai five comprising Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan , Russia and China subsequently, accommodated within itself India, Iran, Pakistan and some other countries as well. It began to show interest in anti-terrorist as well as anti-narcotic operation.

India's acquisition to full membership of SCO particularly against setting of the Iran Deal therefore deserves a special mention in the concluding paragraph of the present essay!

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# **WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF DELHI REGION**

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## **ABSTRACT**

For sustainable development, it is imperative to know the economic worth of environmental resources so that we can have a true measure of economic growth after taking in account the loss incurred with the resources' destruction or deterioration in the process. Contingent Valuation is widely used and recognized methodology across the globe to estimate the worth of a nonmarket entity. This paper attempts to apply this method to know the economic value of Hauz Khas district park, Delhi. Simultaneously, it examines the socio-economic characteristics, motivational factors and other variables which influence willingness to pay of citizens. The results show that the estimated worth of the HauzKhas District Park in 2009 was Rs 6.11crore annually as citizens of Hauz Khas district were willing to pay Rs 655.40 per household annually (in addition to the municipality tax they were paying) for the protection of the park as they derive huge utility from the park. Therefore, it would be self defeating if viability of any commercial/ developmental project is measured ignoring this value. Results also show that while motivational factors are not influential, income, occupation and education along with frequency of visit to the park are quite influential in determining willingness to pay for the park. Specifically, results show that there is positive relationship between demand for the park and income. Hence, the park is a normal good for the citizens. Income elasticity of demand adds encouraging dimension that for the higher income group, the park is a luxury good. These results were obtained using statistical and econometric tools.

**JEL Codes:** C12, C31, C51, Q26

**Key words:** Sustainable Development, Contingent valuation method, willingness to pay, Negative Bionomial model.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The last few decades have seen a growing realization among experts that our conventional mode of industrialisation aimed at raising living standards has incurred a very high unaccounted cost in terms of depletion of the very basic structures of life support. Global warming causing climatic changes, ozone depletion, loss of biodiversity, water, air and soil pollution etc. are some of these costs. Since the days of Malthus, there have been debates on the limits of resources the earth can support for production and consumption. Neoclassical economists refuted the fear of diminishing marginal returns because they believed in substitutability between factors and innovations (technological progress). However, the unprecedented deterioration of the environment and growing stress on earth's resources from increasing population and industrialisation in the late 20th century led to the "Club of Rome" publishing a report titled "Limits to Growth". The models estimated in this report were severely criticised for exaggerating pessimism but this report certainly revived the debate on the protection of environment. Later with the efforts of many global organisations through conferences, active campaigning, publishing reports etc, "Sustainable Development" became the key word in the process of policy formulation. In 1992, the "Earth Summit" provided the statutory framework for member countries to adhere.

Various approaches (viz Ecological Economics, Safe Minimum Standard etc) of sustainability have propounded that for sustainable growth, a minimum level of all forms of capital is needed and so there cannot be complete substitutability, whatever be the level of innovation. Hence for sustainability, depreciation of natural capital should be taken in account like we incorporate other forms of capital while estimating national income<sup>1</sup>. In recent decades, serious attempts have been made to estimate the value of natural capital. In 1993, United Nations' System of National Accounts officially advocated the use of an environmentally adjusted national income accounting or what is popularly known as 'green accounting'<sup>2</sup>. Economists have attempted various measures/ concepts to estimate the values of different sets of environmental goods<sup>3</sup>. This paper broadly uses the Contingent Valuation Method<sup>4</sup> (CVM hereafter) to estimate willingness to pay (WTP) for the concerned resource. In this method, WTP is estimated by means of a hypothetical market condition as real market information is not available directly or indirectly. This technique is unique in its ability to estimate both use and non-use values by eliciting WTP through an extensive survey. In fact, it remains the only technique capable of placing a value on commodities that have a large non-use component of value, and when the environmental improvements to be valued are outside of the range of available data. Inclusion of nonuse value is important as consumers not only derive utility from the use value but also from the nonuse value and accordingly citizens form their WTP. According to Carson(1999), over the years, CVM has been widely used for years by economists to estimate the worth of a range of resources including increasing air and water quality, reduced risk from drinking water and groundwater contaminants, outdoor recreation, protecting wetlands, wilderness areas, endangered species, cultural heritage sites, improvements in public education and public utility reliability, reduction of food and transportation risks and health care queues, and provision of basic environmental services such as drinking water and garbage pickup in developing countries. While the most visible applications are those for natural resource damage assessments such as the Exxon Valdez oil spill, the vast majority of CV applications have been undertaken for the purpose of assisting in policy evaluations.

In particular, Carson et al. (1992) undertook the estimation of lost passive use value in monetary terms from Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989. This study was seminal (and so highly cited) work on CVM for natural resources specifically on passive use value. Nunes (2002), in his very comprehensive study, estimated individual's economic valuation of Alentejo Natural Park in Portugal through CVM for the prevention of tourism/ commercial development plans at the park and thus maintaining use/ recreational and non-use/ existence/ wilderness value. Ojea and Loureiro (2007) attempted to estimate the WTP for the recovery of the common murre (a threatened marine bird) in Spain with emphasis on the measurement of general attitudes and ethical beliefs towards preservation.

In India, Kathiravan and Thirunavukkarasu (2006) studied the farmers' WTP for bovine breeding services in Tamil

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Nadu. Chaudhary (2006) found that an annual recreational use value of Chandigarh city's urban forestry asset was Rs 2.75 crores at 2002-03 prices with mean WTP for all reasonably earning family residing in the city equal to Rs 153 per year for a period of five years. Köhlin(2001) applied CVM for the Orissa Social Forestry Project. Along with reporting results, he discussed reliability issues of the study.

To measure sustainable development in the form of sustainable national income, we need to take in account depreciation of natural capital. However, the economic value of natural resource is not known (as this is not a marketed good). This study is an attempt to get a small but vital link to measure sustainable development objectively. This paper estimates the economic value of a natural resource through CVM. Specifically, we compute the worth of a natural park using CVM and identify the factors which influence WTP for the Park. To fulfil the objectives, we select Hauz Khas District Park in Delhi. The relevance of this study is reflected from the fact that this is first significant study<sup>5</sup> to compute the value of green lungs of Delhi using CVM. This study was motivated from the fact that national capital Delhi which has very high density of population experiences frequent construction works and in the process unaccounted destruction of natural resources. The deplorable peak of this phenomenon was experienced during the preparations of commonwealth games 2010.

The plan of this paper is as follows. In section 2, we describe the data. Methodology is outlined in section 3, followed by discussion on results in section 4. Finally, paper is concluded in section 5.

## **DATA**

### *Study Area*

Hauz Khas District Park, Delhi was selected as the study area. It is considered as one of the parts of the 'green lung' of Delhi. It is a large area spread in about 365 acres comprising of a deer park (picnic hut), a lake area (known as Khilji lake), a rose garden and sports area. Hundreds of people come here in the morning and many in the evening for a walk, yoga and aerobics and on weekends for picnics. The park has very rich flora and fauna. It consists of natural and dense growth of bushes, a large variety of old and large trees, several species of birds including peacocks and large population of deer.

The Khilji lake and the duck pond act as reservoirs and according to an official, the water level has increased as a result of maintenance and more trees being planted in recent years in the park.

The Hauz Khas district park is well suited for research study as it has both use and non-use values. The use values relate to an individual's present and future use/consumption of the environmental resource. Non-use values relate to the individual's WTP even if the consumer makes no use of the resource and has no intention of making use of it (Nunes, 2002). Some environmental assets, such as wilderness, have non-use values; for instance, the value of preserving wilderness so that it will be available for the future generations. In the case of Hauz Khas District Park, the morning walk, aerobics, yoga, picnic, nursery etc have a use value and nonuse value can be attributed to the vast stretch of bushes and trees, the lake, deer, peacock and other flora and fauna.

### *Data Collection*

The present paper uses primary data collected from the citizens residing in the area surrounding the park. The data were collected in year 2009. Stratified random sampling is employed to select the sample of households as follows: First, we identified the residential area within a three kilometre radius around the park. Twelve residential colonies were chosen from within this area. Then from each colony individuals were selected at random. A pilot survey was conducted with open ended elicitation technique before finalising the main survey. The total number of individuals interviewed in the final survey was 368. The data include information on gender, occupation, income, household size, willingness to pay by tax,

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awareness and concern about environment etc. Column 2 of Table2 below reflects that each category in all characteristics got adequate representation in the survey.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The main objective of this paper is to compute the worth of the natural resource by estimating total WTP<sup>6</sup>. Individual WTP was obtained by asking a respondent the maximum amount he/she would give using open ended question after double dichotomous choice questions. According to FAO(2000), average value can be obtained from the mean, median or trimmed mean<sup>7</sup> depending on the nature of data.

$MeanWTP = (\sum WTP) / n$ , where n is the sample size.

Langford et al.(1998) and Buckland et al.(1999) suggest the use of median because mean is sensitive to outliers in the data. Yoo and Kaval (2008) used both mean and median to calculate average WTP with confidence intervals and found that median was lower with closer confidence interval. Nunes (2002) also calculated mean and median values and found that for all programmes, the median was significantly lower than the mean. This reflected positively skewed probability distribution. We also compute both mean and median values in this study.

We analyzed various characteristics of the sampled population using cross tabulations and were able to gain some insights into how they are linked with WTP. We report outcomes from few cross-tabulations on various aspects of the sampled population. In order to determine the marginal contributions of these characteristics, we modified Nunes' (2002) methodology. We constructed an estimation equation with willingness to pay amount (WTPA) as continuous dependent variable.

This gave us definitive insights into individual, household, motivational and locational characteristics that determine WTPA for preservation of the park. We hypothesised that the WTPA is linked to gender, age, education, income (in Rupees), occupation, household size, motivational factors, whether the park ever visited by any member of respondent's family, concern for the environment and distance of residence from the park. We expect that the as preferences and incentives to preserve a park may vary across gender, age groups, education level and income categories and so WTPA. Also, there are chances that residents of farther distance from the park have less WTP due to lower use value. Similarly, motivational factors may also play an important role in the determination of WTPA. Further, the role of protest also needs to be examined in determining the amount people are willing to pay. Since the survey was conducted by seven enumerators, there was suspicion that their individual characteristics may influence WTPA of respondents. So, to examine this, they were also included as a set of dummy variables.

For motivational factors, this study incorporated four variables following studies of Nunes (2002) and Ojea and Loureiro (2007). Use value was broken in to egoistic and altruistic values for the simple reason that Ojea and Loureiro incorporated egoistic and altruistic values for the use of natural resource, former for oneself & family and latter for other people. Respondent reflects egoistic orientations if the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences overoneself & family. Respondent reflects altruistic orientations if the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences over other people. Nonuse value of Nunes is equivalent to biospheric value of Ojea and Loureiro. Respondent reflects biospheric orientations if the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences over nature. Then warmglow effect is another important variable used by Nunes. Warmglow effect is the pleasure derived from giving to good causes or being concerned about the environment. Items related to warmglow effect in the motivational factor scale are taken from the 26 items used in the Likert scale by Nunes and to identify extent of other motivational factors, items were taken from the General Awareness of Consequences scale used by Ojea and Loureiro (2007). So, the four factors used in this study are:

- (1) Egoistic value, (2) Altruistic value, (3) Biospheric value and (4) Warmglow effect.

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These factors could not appear in the econometrics analysis directly. So, these were computed as following. All items (statements) for the motivational factors in the questionnaire (reproduced in appendix 2) had five choices. The choices have following scores:

CHOICE	SCORE
I strongly disagree	1
I disagree	2
Sometimes I agree, sometimes I disagree	3
I agree	4
I strongly agree	5

So, score of one motivational factor for a respondent is equal to the average of scores all items for that motivational factor. For example, if a respondent agrees for first statement for warmglow, disagrees for second statement for warmglow and strongly agrees for third statement of warmglow, then warm glow score=  $(4+2+5)/3= 3.66$  for that respondent.

Score of variable concern was computed similarly from the responses obtained for the two questions related to concern for environment in the Likert scale as discussed below. The value of concern for a respondent was calculated as the average score of environment of question number 1 and all areas of question number 2 in questionnaire. Score equivalent to very important=4, important=3, very serious=4 and so on.

Illustration: Suppose following were the responses of a person in the survey.

1. In your opinion how important are following areas for government to take care of:

Area	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Little important
Infrastructure				
Employment				
Environment		√		
Education and Health				

2. How serious you consider the talks that following are a matter of real concern:

	Very serious	Serious	Somewhat serious	Little serious
About pollution		√		
About global warming	√			
About loss of species			√	

Then, concern =  $(3+3+4+2)/4=12/4=3$

With the help of answers of these questions, we can know the correlation between concern and WTPA.

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Initially, taking all potential correlates of WTPA together, we can write a functional form as:

$WTPA = f(\text{education dummies, occupation dummies, income dummies, age dummies, gender dummy, zero protesters dummy, number of members in family, egoistic value score, altruistic value score, biospheric value score, warm glow effect score, environment concern score, Distance from park, residence owned or rented dummy, whether ever visited or not dummy, interviewer dummies})$  (1)

The detailed definitions and descriptive statistics of variables used in the analysis are presented in appendix table A.1.

After estimation of appropriate model, we predict mean value of WTP from the estimated model. In this, total worth of the park can be obtained by multiplying the mean value of the WTP with the population of the area concerned after estimating the model.

**RESULTS**

*Distribution of WTP Amount*

Columns 5 and 6 of Table 1 show that median for whole data is less than the mean. This indicates that distribution of WTPA is positively skewed which is clearly reflected from figure 1 (through ‘density’ and kernel density of amount). We observe that 15.30 percent respondents are not willing to pay any amount for the park. Out of which, about 12 percent are not willing to pay out of protest<sup>8</sup>.

**Table 1: Distribution of WTP Amount**

WTP amount (Rs)	N	% (all sample)	% (excluding protesters)	Mean	Median	SD	Min	Max
0	56	15.30	3.73	0	0	0	0	0
>0-≤100	37	10.11	11.49	88.92	100	24.01	20	100
>100-≤200	43	11.75	13.35	197.67	200	10.65	150	200
>200-≤300	35	9.56	10.87	280.00	300	24.85	250	300
>300-≤400	13	3.55	4.04	400.00	400	0.00	400	400
>400-≤500	90	24.59	27.95	499.44	500	5.27	450	500
> 500	92	25.14	28.57	1514.13	1000	1230.17	600	6000
(full sample)	366	100.00	-	576.61	400	837.87	0	6000
All (excluding protesters)	322	-	100.00	655.40	500	863.97	0	6000

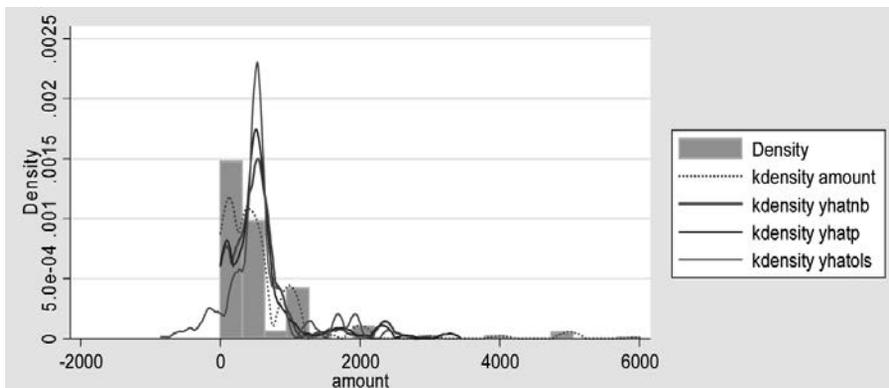


Figure 1: Distribution of observed and predicted values of WTP amount

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*Worth of Hauz Khas District Park*

Mean WTPA per year as tax by 366 respondents (representing respective households) is Rs 576.61 (table 1). When we exclude zero protesters, the mean WTPA increases to Rs 655.40. Further, median WTPA per year as tax excluding zero protesters is Rs 500<sup>9</sup>. According to 2001 census, total number of household in surrounding areas of the park (i.e. in ward No. 11, 13, 14, 15 & 16) is given as 93,211. Therefore, the worth of the Hauz Khas District Park (total WTPA of households of these areas) is Rs. 6, 10, 90,489 (calculated from mean value) or Rs 4, 66, 05,500 (calculated from median) annually.

The mean and median WTPA (predicted) through the estimated regression model (table 3) are Rs. 560.90 and 467.72, respectively and total worth of the park is estimated as Rs. 5, 22, 81,640 and Rs. 4,35, 97,096 respectively.

Table 2 gives distribution of WTPA by a few key individual and household characteristics which are often used as correlates of WTPA.

**Table 2: Distribution of mean WTP amount by non-protester respondents' characteristics**

Characteristics	% of respondents	Mean WTPA (Rs)	Median WTPA (Rs)	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
<b>Gender (n=322)</b>						
Male	50.31	677.28	500	899.94	0	5000
Female	49.69	633.25	500	828.20	0	6000
<b>Age-group (years) (n=318)</b>						
<25	11.64	384.32	250	393.18	0	2000
>25-<40 years	48.11	679.41	500	813.85	0	5000
>40-<55 years	31.13	646.67	400	989.75	0	6000
>55 years	9.12	644.83	500	538.24	0	2000
<b>Education (n=321)</b>						
Primary	7.48	259.17	200	317.83	0	1000
Secondary	20.25	414.92	250	676.07	0	5000
Graduation	47.98	638.31	500	722.35	0	5000
Post Graduation & above	20.25	851.54	500	889.13	0	5000
Technical	4.05	1784.62	1000	2058.25	100	6000
<b>Occupation (n=315)</b>						
Business/trade	15.89	1086.67	500	1247.66	0	5000
Professional	17.76	795.61	500	1164.32	0	6000
Salary earner	38.94	493.20	400	543.67	0	5000
Homemaker	21.18	576.03	500	676.19	0	5000
Student	6.23	397.50	375	340.85	0	1000
<b>Monthly Income Group (Rs.) (n=315)</b>						
0-20,000	11.11	165.43	100	195.57	0	1000
20,001-40,000	22.54	395.77	300	588.20	0	5000
40,001-60,000	38.41	557.85	500	529.47	0	5000
60,001-80,000	17.14	715.74	500	399.03	100	2000
Above 80,000	10.79	2016.18	2000	1680.54	100	6000

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Household Size (n=315)						
4 or less	48.57	674.51	500	840.39	0	5000
>4-<8	46.03	666.34	500	947.23	0	6000
>8-<12	3.81	493.33	500	284.42	20	1000
>12	1.59	340.00	200	421.90	0	1000
Whether Visitor? (n=322)						
No	8.07	273.85	200	252.24	0	1000
Yes	91.93	688.92	500	890.44	0	6000

Note: n represents number of individuals for which information is available.

### ECONOMETRIC ANALYSIS

Initially OLS regression technique was used taking linear equation with dependent variable WTPA. However, results showed that crucial assumptions like normality of residuals etc were not fulfilled. OLS with log form of amount could cure the problem but it was ignored as there was loss of 56 observations with WTPA=0. This not only created sample selection bias but also caused unnecessary loss of freedom. Where as, with above characteristics, Tobit model seemed to be a natural candidate. However, this too was rejected as the assumptions of heteroscedasticity and normality of residuals were not satisfied.

Since distribution of WTPA looked similar to the Poisson distribution, possibility of Poisson model was explored. According to Cameron & Trivedi (2005), Poisson Regression could also be used for sample with very large number of values which seemed like continuous. Regression results were very encouraging but its main assumption, 'mean (predicted WTPA) = variance(predicted WTPA)' could not be satisfied (with mean=555.51 and variance=196462.4) and it turned out to be the case of overdispersion. Also, goodness of fit test after poisson regression model was rejected.

Wooldridge (2006) and Cameron & Trivedi (2005) suggest that in the case of over dispersion, Negative Binomial (NB) model provides the remedy.

In table 3, the over dispersion parameter Alpha seems to be highly significant implying that we reject the null that there is no overdispersion in the Poisson model. Consistent with this is the large increase in the log likelihood from -50407.95 in Poisson model (result not produced) to -2439.3 in NB model (table 3). In figure 1, kernel density of predicted values of NB model (yhatnb) fits better with the observed values (of WTP amount) than those of Poisson (yhatp) and OLS (yhatols) models.

These features of the results are encouraging and suggesting that use of Negative Binomial model is reasonable for this study. Thus, for NB model, equation form is:

$$y_i = \exp(X_i\beta) - \varepsilon_i \quad (2)$$

where  $y_i$  is observed WTPA for user  $i$ ;  $X_i$  is a matrix of individual, household and location characteristics;  $\beta$  is a vector of unknown parameters.  $\varepsilon_i$  is independently and identically distributed (i.i.d) stochastic term.

Thus, using equations (1) and (2) initial model was estimated. We found that though all variables together were able to explain the dependent variable WTPA, the coefficients of many variables including all motivational factors were insignificant.

Results showed that all interviewer dummies were insignificant. This certainly reflects strength of this study. In order to make the model parsimonious, insignificant variables (including various insignificant interaction dummies added between the initial and final models) were dropped in the final regression process. Table 3 below shows the final estimated model.

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**Table 3: Results using Negative Binomial regression model**

Explanatory variables	Coefficient	Robust std. error	$[\exp(\text{coefficient})-1]*100^{10}$
inc2 (Rs20,001-Rs40,000)	0.81***	0.24	123.69
inc3 (Rs 40,001-Rs60,000)	1.24***	0.24	246.05
inc4 (Rs 60,001-Rs 80,000)	1.46***	0.27	329.78
inc5 (Rs 80,001 and above)	2.34***	0.30	934.98
age2540 (25yrs-40yrs)	-0.31	0.25	-26.73
age4055 (40yrs-55yrs)	-0.73***	0.27	-51.63
age55 (above 55yrs)	-0.75**	0.31	-52.88
edu2 (secondary)	-0.09	0.26	-8.68
edu3 (graduation)	0.24	0.27	26.70
edu4 (post grad. & above)	0.14	0.28	15.36
edu5 (technical)	0.67*	0.39	95.63
occu2 (professional)	-0.44**	0.19	-35.58
occu3 (salary earner)	-0.15	0.17	-14.24
occu4 (home maker)	-0.24	0.18	-21.70
occu5 (student)	-0.78**	0.33	-54.29
visited	1.03***	0.19	183.00
Constant	4.54***	0.35	
Alpha	1.98	0.14	
no. of observations: 352		Dispersion: mean	
Log likelihood = -2439.3 probability>chi2 = 0			
***, ** and * respectively refer to 1%, 5% and 10% level of significance			

Table 3 reflects the effective determinants of WTPA for the Hauz Khas District Park. Variables inc2, inc3, inc4, inc5, age4055, age55, edu5, occu2, occu5 and visited are not only significant but also have correct signs based on our expectations and previous studies.

A person's visit (at least once) to the park increases WTPA by 183% as reflected from the results for variable visited. Since it was expected, so survey was not conducted inside the park where every respondent was a visitor. This could have generated upward bias in the estimation.

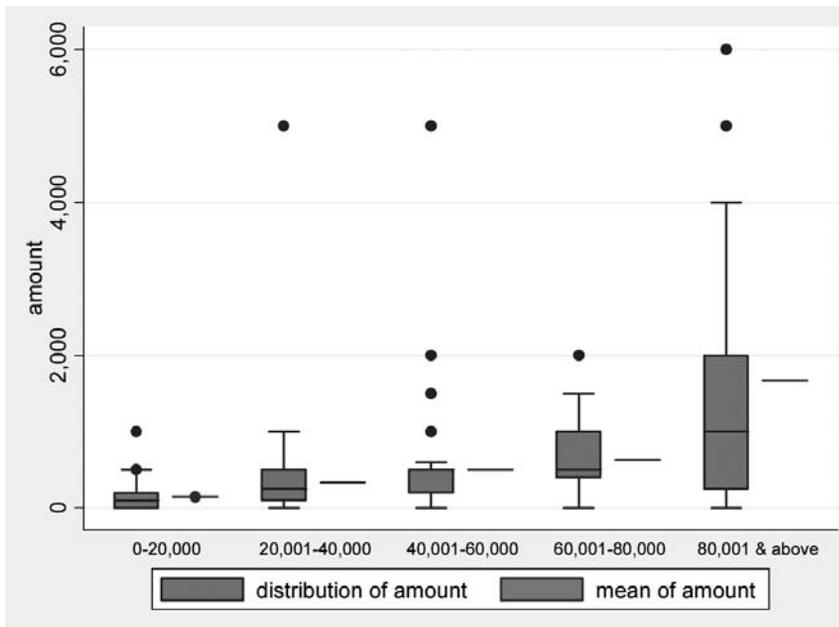
Looking at the bivariate relationship between age and WTP in table 2, we can say that there is no unidirectional pattern. In the table, middle aged respondents have higher WTP but when other factors are controlled, WTPA for respondents with age group of 40-55 years is found to be 51.6% lower than respondents with age below 25 years and for respondents above 55 years, WTP is 52.9% lower than respondents with age below 25 years. WTP for age group 25-40 years is also lower than respondents of age below 25 years but the difference is not statistically significant. This indicates that worth of the park is more for the younger population.

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In education variables, edu5 is marginally significant with positive sign. Results show that respondents with technical education background are willing to pay 95.6% more than respondent with primary education. Although bivariate relationship between education and WTPA shown in table 2 reflects that with level of education, mean WTP increases but since standard deviation also increase so in multivariate regression other education dummies are insignificant.

The results of occupation variables indicate that the WTPA of business/trade category respondents is significantly higher than the WTPA of professionals & students and higher (but insignificantly) than salary earners & homemakers.

The most remarkable and satisfying results are reflected by the income variables. Table 2 and Figure 2 show that broadly there is positive relationship between income and WTPA as both median and mean amount increases with the increase in the income range (though variability in expenditure also increases).

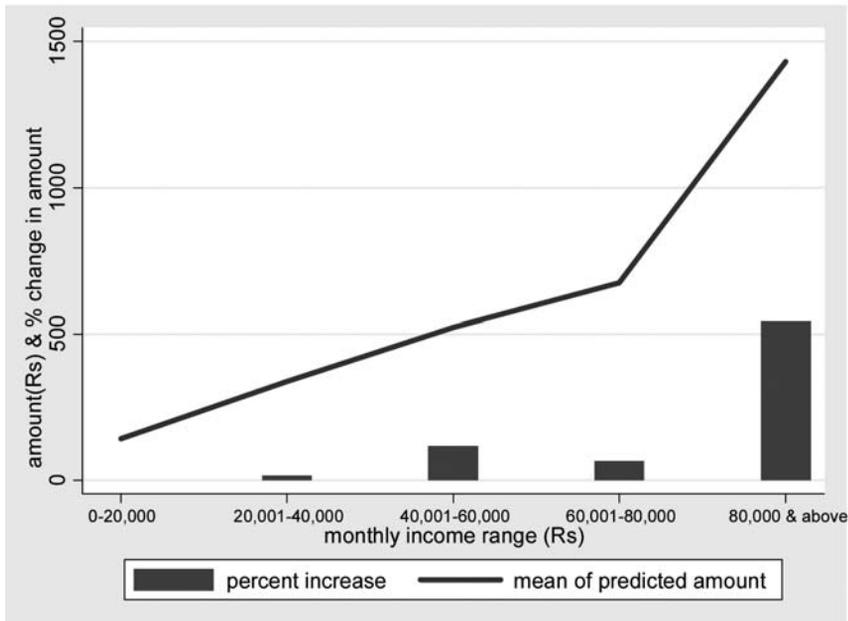


**Figure 2: Bivariate relationship between WTPA and Income**

In multivariate regression analysis, not only all income dummy variables are significant at 1% level of significance but also magnitude of coefficients increased for dummies representing higher level of income. The sign and significance of coefficients of income dummies remained stable across all the estimation techniques attempted (OLS, Tobit, Poisson and NB). This strongly suggests that there is positive relationship between expenditure for the park and income of the respondents *ceteris paribus* and so the natural park can be considered as the normal good.

For the figure 3 below, values were obtained using the results of above regression. It shows that percentage change in WTP amount is positive when we move from lower to subsequent higher income group.

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**Figure 3: Relationship between amount and income controlling other factors**

It also reflects that mean predicted WTP amount increases with the increase in the income group. When we join points for mean predicted values across the income groups, we get the Engel Curve. In the figure, Engel Curve is positively sloped indicating the good in the question is a normal good and sharp increase in the slope between fourth and fifth group reflects the good becoming luxury at higher income.

We could also very crudely try to find the income elasticities of demand taking the mid values of the income range for income due to unavailability of the continuous income variable. The crude values of income elasticities of demand are 0.08, 0.97, 2.93 & 18.99 for the second, third, fourth & fifth income groups respectively. This approves that the natural park is a normal good and for fourth and fifth income groups, it is a luxury good.

Bivariate relationship between sex and WTPA in table 2 indicates that male and female of area of study have equal willingness to pay for the park.

This can be verified by the hypothesis test results:

H<sub>0</sub>: mean (male) - mean (female) = 0

H<sub>a</sub>: difference not equal to zero.

With t statistics: 0.4516 & p value: 0.6518, H<sub>0</sub> is accepted even at 10% level of significance and hence we can conclude that WTPA of male respondent is not significantly different than that of a female respondent and inference is not altered even in multivariate case.

Interestingly, household size (members) also does not influence WTP of respondents when other influences are controlled though the pair wise correlation reflects the correct sign with the value equal to -0.0156.

The results of Protesters variable were the most conflicting among the different estimation techniques. In the OLS model, it was significant at 1% level of significance with correct negative sign (in line with Nunes' result) but in the Negative Binomial model, it became insignificant and hence it was dropped in the final model.

## **CONCLUDING REMARKS**

Production method in National Income Accounting calculates net value addition by subtracting depreciation of capital. However, generally estimated net value addition or growth in the economy is inflated as it does not take in account depreciation of natural capital. This practice of exclusion is in vogue mainly due to two reasons. First, there has been no realisation among policy makers/ producers that loss of natural/ environmental resources amounts to economic value loss especially in long term. Second, the economic value of natural resources is not known which could be used in accounting. In recent times, it is nice that the first reason is getting diminished. However, the second reason remains a real problem. Though it is imperative to know the economic worth of environmental resources so that we can have a true measure of economic growth, the value can only be computed indirectly as it can not be known through market mechanism. Among approaches to measure value of non-market entities, Contingent Valuation Method is widely used and recognized methodology across the globe and this technique is adopted in this study because this is the only one to measure both use and nonuse/ existence values of a natural capital. The central component of this technique is to know the willingness to pay by a respondent for the natural resource through primary survey.

This paper attempted to apply this method to know the economic value of Hauz Khas district park, Delhi. Primary survey was conducted in the areas surrounding the park. The mean willingness to pay per year as tax by 366 respondents (representing respective households and excluding zero protesters) is estimated as Rs655.40 (in addition to the municipality tax they were paying) for the protection of the park as they derive huge utility from the park. Thus, the worth of the HauzKhas District Park as natural resource in 2009 is found as Rs 6, 10, 90,489 (calculated from mean value) or Rs 4, 66, 05,500 (calculated from median) per year.

Further, Negative Binomial model is used to examine effect of various socio-economic characteristics, motivational factors and other variables on WTPA. The role of visit to park, age, education, occupation and income were some of the factors that determine how much an individual prefer to pay for the park.

The study also attempted to find out the awareness and concern of citizens for environment. The results showed that citizens of areas surveyed were well aware of environmental issues and they were quite concerned with the issues like pollution, global warming and loss of species. In the end of the conversation many shown their interest in the conservation of natural resources and encouraged us to carry on this study. Thus, WTP amount revealed for the park and level of awareness & concern for environment of respondents together unveiled the high worth for environmental good in this study. In fact, the park turned out to be normal good for respondents of all income groups. So, depletion of environmental good deprives citizens to derive higher utility with higher earned income and thus, we do not have development in holistic sense<sup>12</sup>.

Here, we consider it important to highlight some of the achievements of this study. First, this study could estimate the economic value of HauzKhas District Park using established and popular methodology and the value turned out to be very high. Second, the estimated value deserves high degree of acceptability as methodology adopted and results of the study are in line of guidance and experiences of key researchers in this field. Third, the process of survey itself was an achievement as it could initiate a thought process among the people surveyed and surveyors regarding the worth of a natural resource in their locality.

Finally, the results of this study highlight 'certain important policy implications for the government' and 'indirectly, ethical or corporate responsibility for the private enterprises including Multinationals' which is very pertinent for the sustainable development.

- Any developmental or commercial project should take destruction of natural resources in account both as loss of capital and loss of welfare as natural resources give high level of utility to the citizens and so citizens are willing to pay a high price to preserve the resource. It also means that citizens desire natural resource in vicinity even it comes with a price.

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- For producers including government, environment clearance norms should be strictly implemented. Alternatively, producers should compensate in monetary terms for the loss of natural capital and the compensation amount should be used for preservation and creation of natural resources.
- Though this study does not intend to levy a tax on existing parks as these parks are maintained by the taxes of citizens to the municipalities, government may levy tax for new parks from citizens residing in surrounding areas to raise the fund.
- When applied, to make the tax politically viable, its structure should be income wise progressive.
- In many countries green accounting (computation of national income taking in account of depreciation of natural capital) has become mandatory and now in many countries government is sponsoring agencies to carry out work for the estimation of economic value of natural resources. In India, 'green economy' was a luxury till few decades back due to paucity of fund but now the booming Indian Economy can steadily afford to join others in saving planet.
- MEs can invest in producing eco-friendly goods (like we have organic items) which has potential market at least with higher income group.

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**APPENDIX**

**Appendix 1**

**Table A.1: Definition and descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analysis**

Variable	Definition	N*	Mean	Std. Error
<b>Dependent variable</b>				
WTPA	Amount of Willingness to pay: represents demand of the park	366	576.61	837.87
<b>Explanatory variables</b>				
<i>Income group (in Rs per month):</i> inc1: below 20,000 (reference)	1 if income $0 \leq 20,000$ ; 0 otherwise	361	0.11	0.31
inc2: 20,001-40, 000	1 if income $>20,000 \leq 40,000$ ; 0 otherwise	361	0.23	0.42
inc3: 40,001-60, 000	1 if income $>40,000 \leq 60,000$ ; 0 otherwise	361	0.37	0.48
inc4: 60,001-80,000	1 if income $>60,000 \leq 80,000$ ; 0 otherwise	361	0.17	0.38
inc5: 80,001 and above	1 if income $>80000$ ; 0 otherwise	361	0.11	0.32
<i>Age-Group:</i> age25: below 25 years (reference)	1 if age $\leq 25$ years; 0 otherwise	364	0.12	0.32
age2540: 25-40 years	1 if age $>25 \leq 40$ years; 0 otherwise	364	0.45	0.5
age4055: 40-55 years	1 if age $>40 \leq 55$ years; 0 otherwise	364	0.32	0.47
age55: above 55 years	1 if age $>55$ years; 0 otherwise	364	0.11	0.31
<i>Education:</i> edu1: Primary (reference)	1 if educated upto primary; 0 otherwise	366	0.08	0.27
edu2:Secondary	1 if educated upto secondary; 0 otherwise	366	0.21	0.41
edu3:Graduation	1 if educated upto graduation; 0 otherwise	366	0.48	0.5
edu4: Post Graduation and above	1 if educated PG and above; 0 otherwise	366	0.2	0.4
edu5: Technical	1 if technically educated; 0 otherwise	366	0.04	0.2
<i>Occupation:</i> occu1: Business/Trade (reference)	1 if primary occupation is Business/Trade; 0 otherwise	367	0.17	0.38
occu2: Professional	1 if Professional; 0 otherwise	367	0.17	0.38
occu3: Salaried	1 if Salaried including retired; 0 otherwise	367	0.37	0.48
occu4: Homemaker	1 if Homemaker; 0 otherwise	367	0.23	0.42
occu5: Student	1 if Student; 0 otherwise	367	0.07	0.25

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male	1 if sex is male, 0 if female	368	0.5	0.5
members	No. of members in the respondent's family	357	4.87	2.17
ownedd	1 if house of respondent is owned, 0 if rented	367	0.6	0.49
egoistic	average motivational score when the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences on oneself including family	366	4.54	0.49
altruistic	average motivational score when the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences on the other people	366	3.34	0.49
biospheric	average motivational score when the pro-environmental attitude emerges to take action as to avoid consequences over nature	364	3.12	0.62
warmglow	average motivational score when pleasure is derived from giving for a good cause	355	3.07	0.86
concern	average score showing the level of concern for environment	361	10.4	1.58
protesters	1 for those respondents who put zero bid (or shown zero WTP) for reasons other than zero value for the park, 0 otherwise	367	0.9	0.3
Visited	1 if respondent visited the park atleast once; 0 otherwise	367	0.9	0.3
distance	average distance in kilometres from respondent's area to park	368	1.49	0.69

\* N represents number of individuals for which information is available.

**Appendix 2**

**Statements used for Motivational Factor Scale(motivational factors represented by respective statements are shown in brackets)**

1. Environmental protection benefits everyone (altruistic)
2. Over the next decade, thousands of species of plants and animals will become extinct (biospheric)
3. Claims that we are changing the climate are greatly exaggerated (biospheric)
4. While some local plants and animals may have been harmed by environmental degradation, over the whole earth there has been little effect (biospheric)
5. Environmental threats to public health have been exaggerated (altruistic)
6. Environmental protection is beneficial to my health (egoistic)
7. Environmental protection will provide a better world for me and my children (egoistic)
8. Environmental protection will help me to have better quality of life (egoistic)

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9. Environmental damage generated here harms people all over the world (altruistic)
10. It is difficult for me to decline my help to other individuals who beg for charity or national fund raising campaign. (warmglow)
11. My family and I like and feel happy to contribute to good causes such as the protection of environment, and whenever we can afford it we do not decline our help to such fund raising campaigns. (warmglow)
12. Giving blood is giving life. (warmglow)

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1. The estimation of depletion of natural resources is warranted as it not only influences productivity of factors and production but also utility of consumers.
2. See Hussen (2004) for survey on 'green accounting'
3. Various approaches to measure use value and non-use values are detailed in Hussen (2004)
4. For detailed survey, see Hussen (2004)
5. As per authors' knowledge
6. by estimating the average value of WTP and multiplying it with the population size.
7. The 10 percent trimmed mean is calculated after 10 percent of the responses have been trimmed from both ends of the distribution. The median is the 50% trimmed mean.
8. A protester is defined as a person who is unwilling to pay out of protest (Nunes,2002). The reason to protest may include his/her disbelief in the described national fund campaign, preference to spend that amount of money elsewhere, proposed protection plan is a break in the development of the region, protection of natural areas is a responsibility of the government etc.
9. Statistically, median is treated as better measure given the positively skewed distribution of WTP amount.
10. shows the percentage change in dependent variable due to change in value of dummy variable from 0 to 1 (Wooldridge, 2006).
11. When the prices are constant (along with other factors), more demand is reflected in more WTP by the consumer. For a public good, quantity of the good is fixed. So, in this case, one consumer's demand is more than the other consumer's if former is willing to contribute more than the latter to have the good.
12. As development means welfare with growth and welfare is aggregate of utility derived from the access of various desirable goods in life including health, education, recreation etc.

# **TRIFURCATED MCD: CHALLENGE TO SURVIVE POLITICO-ECONOMIC CRISIS**

**SIDDHESHWAR SHUKLA\***

## **INTRODUCTION**

Municipal Corporations of Delhi (MCDs) particularly, North Delhi Municipal Corporation (North MCD) and East Delhi Municipal Corporation (East MCD) are often in news for non-performance and corruption but what has added to their woes is rapidly deteriorating financial crisis. The situation has gone so appalling for these two corporations that they could not disburse salaries to their sanitation, health and primary medical employees resulting to spree of strikes since 2015 which led to pile up of garbage in the city<sup>1</sup>. It did not occur overnight but result of a gradual sinking which started since tri-furcation of pre-existing Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD). These two MCDs were aware about their financial constraints in the post-partition phase and also extra burden of non-plan expenditure but their failures to create new resources for revenue coupled with hostile state government worsened the situation. The three corporations were so hopeful from the recommendations of the Fourth Delhi Finance Commission that the mayors along with other political appointees had been fiercely protesting to pressurise the government only to table the report in Delhi assembly. A parallel legal battle was also fought in Delhi High Court by Leader of Opposition in Delhi assembly Vijender Gupta which culminated in time bound direction to Delhi government to table the report in the assembly as part of her constitutional responsibility<sup>2</sup>. The cash strapped North MCD and East MCD, which are still unable to pay salaries to their employees were hopeful that even if the partial implementation of the report would help them to tide over their immediate non-plan expenditure.

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## **FOURTH DELHI FINANCE COMMISSION**

The commission has three sets of recommendations<sup>3</sup> to be implemented by Central Government, Government of National Capital Territory (NCT), Delhi and the concerned civic bodies. Among them, the recommendations coming in the jurisdiction of Delhi government were very crucial for MCDs as they were aimed to pump more money to improve their financial health. These recommendations were due to be implemented from 2012-13, are listed in para (D) as under:

- a) Delhi government shall assign the net proceeds of Motor Vehicle Act (revenue from registration of new vehicles referred as transport tax etc), entertainment tax and betting tax which are around Rs 2,000 crore, Rs 100 crore and Rs 10 crore per annum respectively.
- b) Delhi government shall give 12.5% of its total revenue collection minus above mentioned three items; to MCDs which is now 5.5 % but practically 4.0% as 1.5% is held as performance initiative. The state government never released the performance initiative blaming poor performance of MCDs.
- c) Half of the total money allocated to MCDs should be distributed among them on the basis of population and area ration in 70:30 while remaining 50% was to be given on the basis of comparative financial health and infrastructure deficit. The commission proposed four standards to assess infrastructure deficit which are right of way of the human and vehicular traffic, public health, regulation of buildings and maintenance of parks and conveniences besides concluding that only East MCD and North MCD were eligible for share in remaining 50% budget.
- d) Delhi government will reimburse 100 % of education expenses of MCDs which is presently only 5%.

The importance of these financial recommendations can be assessed with the fact that the weakest among the three - East MCD which got Rs 180 crore as its share from total revenue of Delhi government in 2015-16 would have received over Rs 281 crore. As per revised budget estimates the expenditure on education of East MCD was Rs 597 crore liable to be reimbursed besides getting its share from transport tax, entertainment tax and betting tax. The recommendations are sufficient to bail out even the least resourceful East MCD, which is presently facing a revenue deficit of Rs 600 crore and an accumulated liability of Rs 1525 crore.

It was just a posturing of political rivalry or pressure tactics of Delhi government to get more powers, resources and autonomy from the Centre, the former decided to put the ball in the court of the latter, tactically. The Government of NCT Delhi decided to accept the recommendations of the Fourth Delhi Finance Commission in totality in the following sequence -

1. The Government of India to accept, implement the recommendations of the commission mentioned in para (B) 1 to 12 of this summarised note and as recommended in the report.
2. Only after the Government of India implements the aforesaid recommendations, Government of NCT Delhi will then implement the recommendations of its part. It needs to be emphasised that Delhi government is keen to implement the recommendations of the commission. However, it would be completely impossible for Delhi government to do that till such time as Central Government implements its own part of recommendations.
3. MCDs to implement their part of recommendations

Before coming to Central Government's part of recommendations one thing is important to mention here those were not the conditions to implement the report but commission had put a condition to Delhi government to reimburse 50 percent losses of MCDs until the time it is able to convince Central government to disburse the amounts of the revenue recommended by the commission. The commission directed Delhi government to request the Centre to implement following recommendations which are actually constitutional amendments in the direction to give Delhi powers at par with other states.

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- i) Ensure that the Union Ministry of Urban Development does not deal with matters relating to the constitution and powers of the municipalities and other local authorities of the NCT Delhi
- ii) Transfer Delhi Development Authority, Slum Areas (Improvement and Clearance) Act 1956 or limiting the authorities of MCDs on matters relating to regulation of building activities or undertaking of improvement works.
- iii) Central government should not use its powers under 243 W and 243 ZF of the constitution to take back powers already conferred to Delhi government
- iv) Omit the provisions of section 28 of Delhi Police Act 1978 which are related to municipal governance
- v) Centre should rescue from framing building bye - laws for regulating the construction of buildings in Delhi
- vi) Direct the commissioner of police to refrain from framing or enforcing of regulations that impede implementation of the municipal laws enacted by the Parliament
- vii) Consider releasing the share of the NCT of Delhi in the taxes and duties in the Union List at par with other states in the Union of India
- viii) Should also permit the NCT of Delhi to collect and appropriate stamp duties and duties of excise on the medicinal and toilet preparation included in the Union List
- ix) Not deny Delhi government to enjoy benefit of assignment of proceeds of tax on sale or purchase of goods and on consignment of goods levied and collected by Central government.
- x) Government to include the net proceeds of taxes collected by the Government of India in respect of matters for which Delhi legislative assembly has powers to enact laws and also the share of the Union Territory of Delhi in the net proceeds of the taxes and duties in the Union List. Delhi government is not getting adequate share in central taxes from the Central government at par with that the other states.

The recommendations to Central government are practically a draft to grant full statehood to Delhi besides limiting the powers of Delhi police so have little chances to be implemented in the current political scenario. The commission has also recommended several measures to civic bodies on their part to improve their financial conditions by increasing revenue collection and finding out new sources of revenue. The Commission expressed its concerns on less than 25 % properties being under the property tax net and pushed for bringing all the properties in the tax loop besides advising them to focus on only core municipal functions listed in the 12th schedule of the constitution and keep their hands away from running parallel services like public health, big-hospitals and medical colleges. The commission also recommended the civic bodies to impose electricity tax, earn revenue from proposed tourist facilitation centres and opening of temporary foods courts from open areas, build commercial bus stops from contract carriage permit scheme, and impose liability to pay license for using the rights of the municipalities in respect of land under and along the pavements/ streets and roads

### **PRESENT CRISIS**

The financial crisis of the weakest among the three - East MCD, came out in open first as the sanitation workers went on strike in March 2015 as the civic body could not pay their salaries for past over three months<sup>4</sup>. They stopped collecting garbage and even littered it on the busy roads to force the administration to take call on their demands. Finally, the state government agreed to release the pending budget of the civic body following which the employees called off their five days old strike leaving behind an example for North MCD employees who were also facing similar crisis. In 2015, these two civic bodies faced two more major strikes in June and October besides several departmental and zone level strikes to clear salaries. In October, Delhi government had to release Rs 493 crore to clear the previous payments but that too was too little to bring them back on the track. The situation became so worse that on December 22, around 100 primary teachers

barged into the meeting of the house of North MCD demanding immediate release of their salaries due since past three months. East MCD had to discontinue old age pensions and delay social welfare and infrastructure projects in the absence of funds<sup>5</sup>.

In their revised budget estimates for 2015-16, commissioners of North MCD and East MCD have estimated budget deficit of Rs 700 crore<sup>6</sup> and Rs 1811 crore<sup>7</sup> respectively. The commissioners of all the three MCDs have proposed discontinuing of some pension schemes, hike in property tax besides new taxes like profession tax, education cess and reform tax but these are unlikely to be implemented as elections are scheduled before May 2017. The financial crisis of the civic bodies has also adversely affected development works as they are unable to pay their contractors engaged to execute works<sup>8</sup>.

A look on the financial data of the three MCDs reveal that they have reached in such a pitiable state that even entire revenue is not sufficient to pay salaries to their employees forget about civic services and development works. The internal revenue of these MCDs for 2015-16 is pegged at Rs 5,975 crore while their combined wage bill is set to touch Rs 6,240 crore excluding the additional burden of over Rs 2,000 crore due to implementation of the Seventh Pay Commission recommendations. As per budget estimates of North MCD, the salary expenditure of the Corporation is Rs 2,640 crore - while their internal revenue is only Rs 2,375 crore. The situation in East MCD is similar as the agency has a gap of Rs 95 crore in their internal income and expenditure on salaries for the financial year 2015-16. The condition of South MCD is marginally better as the civic body has estimated earnings of Rs 2,755 crore against salary expenditure of Rs 2,640cr. Furthermore, revenue by way of house tax, parking fees, advertisement, conversion charges, building plan sanction, etc do not come in regularly leading to delay in payment of salaries and other expenses. This is the situation when around 40 per cent posts are vacant and a majority of the employees are contractual workers who are paid less than their permanent counterparts."In 2014-15 over Rs 428 crore were allocated for various development activities out of which only Rs 17.6 crore was utilised. In this year, Rs 119 crore for unauthorised colonies and Rs 30 crore for rural development were untouched," said a senior officer in the accounts department of north MCD. As per the budget data, in the current year, allocations amounting Rs 345 crore for various development works were not lying on paper till December 2015<sup>9</sup>.

## **THE ROAD AHEAD**

The three civic bodies have finalised their budgets for the financial year 2016-17 with no tax hike or rejecting all the new taxes proposed by the commissioners, the last budget the current political executive would be able to implement as MCD elections are due by May 2017. The Commissioner of North MCD P K Gupta said, "Collecting property tax from unauthorised colonies as per existing tax rate is too expensive and it will finally result as a liability on the corporation. Including all properties under tax net looks a fantastic idea but it will not yield proportionate revenue,". As South Delhi, hosts all the plush colonies all the premier property tax payers came in the territorial jurisdiction of South Delhi Municipal Corporation (South MCD). Presently, not even a single group 'A' colony falls in the jurisdiction of North and East MCD there are however a few colonies of group 'B' category colonies in East MCD. It was due to group A category properties in South MCD areas; it is the richest civic body amongst the three.

The political analysts are expecting major improvement in the financial health of the corporations if Aam Aadmi Party takes their charge after Local Bodies Election in 2017 which may be true up to some extent but if the corporations want to stand on their own they will have to find out resources to generate their own revenue. But, eliminating prevalent corruption is one of the pre-requirement to improve financial health of these ailing civic bodies. The three revenue earning departments of the civic bodies - Advertisement Department, Parking, and Remunerative Project Cell; are not able to route the money the citizens and service users are paying. Surprisingly, the reaction of the political executive was laughable as on account of prevalent corruption; North MCD ordered 33 major parking sites in its area 'free for users'<sup>10</sup>. The result is

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parking contractors are charging hefty amount to users but the collection is not going in the accounts of the civic bodies.

Another major leakage of the revenue is from trade and health licenses. The civic bodies are empowered to issue trade licenses to retailers, wholesalers and weekly markets in their areas besides health licenses to all the eateries in the city. There are huge number of eateries, retail shops, general stores and medical stores etc in the city which are not registered with civic bodies so they don't pay the tax. There are also talks among the corridors of power to merge them into one single entity and revive the pre- trifurcation status. If so, the extra burden of human resources at the top level will also decrease sufficiently but that only would not be able to bring any drastic change.

However, the most promising area in terms of bulk and long term revenue lies in the redevelopment of old and abundant properties of civic bodies. The option was enthusiastically explored by East MCD's first Municipal Commissioner Sajjan Singh Yadav in his brief tenure of around a year<sup>12</sup>. But after his transfer, these projects were left to die. MCD had successfully used this option in constructing the tallest and largest building - Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Civic Centre; which is the head quarter of North MCD and South MCD. The 28 storey building was constructed at the place of an old office of MCD and presently yields crores as rent besides housing all the offices in one building. There are abundant properties of North MCD and East MCD which can be redeveloped into better offices besides commercial, institutional and residential spaces having a potential to revive corporations. The corporations had also conducted a first hand survey of such properties but the project could never more beyond of files.

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# REVISITING RESERVATION POLICY

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The meaning of affirmative action has evolved over time as it is an outcome of the 1960's Civil Rights Movement in US, intended to provide equal opportunities for members of minority groups and women in education and employment. In 1961, President Kennedy was the first to use the term "affirmative action" in an Executive Order that directed government contractors to take "affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that the employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, creed, colour, or national origin." The meaning of affirmative action in India has always been understood to denote the reserving of certain number of seats or positions, in a desirable institution or occupation, for members of groups that were under-represented in such positions. The underlying objective is to reduce the extent of the under-representation of these members. It has always been clear that these policies of affirmative action involve an effort to discriminate in favour of marginalised groups and due to this the controversy surrounding the constitutionality of affirmative action programs has made the topic one of heated debate.

To alleviate discriminatory practices against certain historically oppressed groups, a small number of countries have adopted affirmative action. The United States and India are the two biggest democratic, multicultural country and both are constitutionally committed to preserving civil liberties and individual rights as in both the countries the minorities groups have a long history of deprivation, disadvantage and under representation in comparison to the upper strata of the society. (Weisskopf: 2004) And, both the nations had sought to address the needs of these minority groups through some sort of mechanism which is known as "affirmative action". In the United States, affirmative action is defined as a system of preferential treatment for minorities and women which attempts to compensate them for being

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denied opportunities of advancement due to past and present discrimination. India has adopted affirmative action to deal with the disadvantaged segments of their populations.

The United States developed affirmative action to fight discrimination against minority groups and women, while India created affirmative action to remedy its history of discrimination against groups, such as the “untouchables,” who occupy the lowest rung in the Hindu caste system. The groups that had been favoured through affirmative action in the US are African Americans, Hispanic Americans and Native Americans. In India, the reservation policies have included broadly Dalits (the former “untouchables”, officially classified as ‘Schedule Castes’), Adivasis (tribal classified as “Scheduled Tribe”), and a variety of “Other Backward Classes”. Various names have been attributed to Indian affirmative action like Protective Discrimination, Compensatory Discrimination, Reservation, Special Provision etc.

The quota based affirmative action programme in India, called the ‘reservation system’, has two components: it is targeted separately towards SC/ST and OBC groups. But, the policies of affirmative action which got public support initially, have become increasingly controversial in both India and US as the tension had stiffened between the individual right to equal treatment and rampant inequalities of opportunities and in each country the issue of affirmative action remain the most contested issue in the political arena and in the judicial system.

## **EVOLUTION OF RESERVATION IN INDIA**

The affirmative action begins in the late 19th and early 20th centuries with the development of organized movements especially in the southern part of India, designed to reduce the power of Brahmins. The anti Brahmin movements led to increasing pressure to establish reserved seats for non Brahmins in public service and also to provide aid for non Brahmins in educational institutions service and also to provide non Brahmins in educational institutions.

In the 1920s the pressure for reservation in favour of non Brahmins was translated into action in the Princely State of Mysore as well as in the Bombay and Madras Presidencies. The Mysore Government in 1921 instituted a system of reserved places in public service positions and in higher educational admissions for “backward communities”, defined as all but the Brahmin community. Similar reservations were introduced in Bombay in 1925. In 1926, special quotas were established for public appointments, according to which every fifteen appointments should be allocated as follows: two to Brahmins, two to “backward” Hindus, six to other Hindus, two to “depressed” (i.e. untouchables), two to Anglo-Indians and Christians and one to a Muslims.

In the 1930s, reservation policies were implemented in the political arena throughout British India. A new round of major constitutional reforms had come under discussions in the late 1920s and the early 1930s, as the colonial authorities sought to establish a federal assembly, as well as provincial assemblies, to which Indian would elect representatives whose leaders would exercise substantially expanded powers under the overall British rule. The British proposed, and the Indian national movement led by Mahatma Gandhi with apprehensions forced to accept the establishment of separate electorates and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, leader of India’s marginalised group, strongly advocated the same for the untouchable communities as well. Gandhi was totally opposed to any kind of separation of the “Harijans” (literally “people of god”, a term Gandhi coined for the untouchables) from the rest of the Hindu community. The two leaders struggled intensely over this issue, but they ultimately agreed to a compromise, famously known as the “Poona Pact”, in which there would indeed be reserved seats for the depressed classes in the federal and provincial legislative, but candidates for these seats would be elected by general electorates rather than by separate untouchable electorates. This compromise was incorporated into the Government of India Act of 1935, which established the new federal and provincial assemblies. The act established a system of reserved seats, but not separate electorates, for two communities- the untouchables and tribals, now officially labelled “Scheduled Castes” (SCs) and “Scheduled Tribes” (STs).

After India got independence in 1947 and the separate nation of Pakistan was formed, the issue of reservation came to the fore in the context of the drafting of the Indian Constitution. Ambedkar as the Law Minister and as the Chairman of the Constituent Assembly was able to press for a constitutional basis for reservation favouring India's SCs. The Indian Constitution came into force in 1950 and it provides for fundamental rights such as the guarantee to all citizen of equality before law (Article 14), the prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth (Article 15), and the assurance of equality of opportunity in matters of public employment (Article 16). On the other hand, the same constitution also includes as a "Directive Principle of State Policy". Article 46 says "the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people and, in particular, of the SCs and STs, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation". Pursuant to this directive, there are a series of provisions that allow for affirmative action in favour of members of under-represented groups.

To implement the provisions, list of officially SCs and STs collected in the 1931 census of India about the respondents' ethnic and/or caste status and about the kind of disadvantages associated with different ethnic and caste communities. With the passing time, new additions have been done into the list. In principle, SCs were to be identified as communities that are backward because of untouchability, defined essentially in terms of their ritually "polluting" status in the society. The designation of STs is less problematic, spatial and cultural isolation was the key and these characteristics were closely correlated with socio-economic backwardness.

## **THE OBC RESERVATION**

The impetus for the heightened contention has come not so much from the SC and the ST reservation, in particular, as from efforts to expand the range of reservation granted to "Other Backward Classes" (OBCs). In few parts of Southern India many OBCs has been long favoured by forms of positive education in employment and in occupation. National reservation for OBCs has been rejected by the then ruling Congress government of 1961 but state governments were given discretion to grant reservation to groups they deemed deserving. As SC and ST reservations became more firmly established, more and more low and even middle caste Hindus began to agitate for similar reservations on the grounds that their communities were no less social economically disadvantaged than those benefitting from positive discrimination. Their demands met with some positive response at the state level in the 1970s but they were not seriously entertained till the 'Mandal Commission report' as the report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980 (better known as the Mandal Commission Report, after its Chairman, B.P. Mandal).

The Mandal Commission was appointed in 1978 by the then ruling Janata party which catered to agitation by lower caste Hindus for more agitation. The commission was directed to consider the matter of extending reservation to OBCs at the national level, along the lines of the reservations already granted to SCs i.e. 15% of the population and STs as 7.5% of the population. In its report the commission recommended that OBCs be granted employment reservation in central government services and public sector undertakings.(Radhakrishnan: 1996) The commission also recommended a series of measures designed to upgrade the education of the OBC students and called for reserved seats for them in educational institutions as well. On the basis of a complex combination of social, educational and economic criteria, the commission classified as OBC sub groups not only a great number of lower caste Hindu sub castes but also a substantial number of Muslim sub groups and other religious/ethnic minority communities, amounting to an estimate of 52% of the Indian population. Because prior SC rulings had set a limit of 50% on national reservations, however, the commission recommended that reservation to be extended only to the most deserving OBCs amounting to 27% thus bringing the overall percentage of reserved seats in public employment to 49.5%.

The Mandal Commission's report was not accepted at that time as Janata Dal government lost power in national elections and Subsequent Congress government did not apply it. Again in 1990, forming a coalition, Janata Dal came

into power under the Prime Minister-ship of V.P. Singh. This government implemented the recommendations of the Mandal Commission. This move was opposed by the upper caste sections ranging from challenging it into Supreme Court to protests to violent moves like self immolation. But in November 1992, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of reservation in employment at the national level for OBCs amounting to 27% of the population.

The Mandal Report adopted the criteria of social and educational backwardness to identify a list of castes deserving of reservation, and estimated that 52% of India's population belonged to these caste groups (but see above for an alternative estimate much lower than this). In 1990 policy OBCs were awarded a 27% quota in public employment. In 2006 the government announced its intent to extend similar quotas to OBCs in elite institutions of higher education, such as the Indian Institutes of Technology, the Indian Institutes of Management, and the premier medical schools and universities. This encounter ed massive street-level protest and an appeal to the Supreme Court, which was hearing the case in 2007-8. In an earlier case, the Supreme Court had ruled that quotas could not exceed 49%. Given that quotas for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes between them already account for 22% of the total, only the residual figure of 27% remained. This is the reason why, notwithstanding the different estimations of OBC numbers, the proposed quota has remained at 27%. (Sivaramayya: 1996)

The Supreme Court had also, in *Indra Sawhney vs. Union of India*, ruled that the "creamy layer" among OBCs should be excluded from the ambit of reservations. The "creamy layer" refers to the upper strata among OBCs, castes that have become prosperous, partly as a result of land reform policies in the 1970s and partly as a result of effectively mobilising political power. Their access to these two resources - political power and land - along with the fact that they are not, like Dalits, victims of social discrimination or stigmatisation, has provided the basis of arguments that oppose the extension of quotas to OBCs.

By then, there has been a much more positive experience of PD policies institutionalised in local governance - from the panchayat at the village level to the zilla parishad at the district level - by constitutional amendment in 1992. These institutions now have a 33% quota for women at every level, including for the position of chairperson; and quotas for SCs and STs in proportion to their percentage in the local population. Many states have also introduced quotas for OBCs. Over the three rounds of election to the panchayats since the quotas were introduced, 1 million women have entered local bodies, in some states exceeding the legislated 33% quota. While women and Dalit men and women have had to struggle hard against every form of patriarchal and caste oppression, ranging from intimidation to violence, to assert their right to lead these local institutions, they have often succeeded in doing so. The panchayat office has in some areas become a public space where discrimination can no longer be practised in the way that it is outside. With women reservation etc. quota-based representation in the panchayats has certainly not transformed the countryside, but it has without question opened up new spaces which have a greater potential to transform the lived experiences of caste and gender than merely electing a marginalised party to power at the state level.

**The Constitutional Safeguards for the Marginalised Groups: Few prominent Articles**

Article 14 of the Indian Constitution establishes the general right of equality: The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

Article 15 (1): the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

Article 15 (4): nothing in this article or clause (2) of article 29 shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the SCs and STs.

Article 15 (5): nothing in this article or sub clause (g) of clause (1) of Article 19 shall prevent the state from making any special provision, by law, for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the SCs and STs in so far as such provisions relate to their admission to the educational institutions including private

educational institutions, whether aided or unaided by the state, other than the minority educational institutions referred to in clause (1) of article 30.

(2) The object of Article 15 (4) is to make it constitutional to reserve seats for SCs and STs and Backward classes in the educational institutions, as well as to make other special provisions as may be necessary for their advancement including the provision of payment of scholarship, hostel facilities, concession in fees, relaxation of age etc.

Article 16 (1): there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state.

..... (4): nothing in this article shall prevent the state from making any provision for the reservation of appointments of posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state.

..... (46): the state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in particular, of the SCs and STs, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.

Article 330, 332, 334 of the constitution require that a certain number of parliamentary constituencies, both at the national at the provincial level, be represented by an SC member, elected by all eligible voters in the constituency, with the number of reserved seats proportionally to SC population in the constituency and likewise for STs. Though the Constitution provided for quotas for SCs and STs for a period of 10years, these have been routinely extended without any parliamentary or broader political debate. Parallel to the general consensus on the continuation of the quotas, there has grown a groundswell of political mobilisation - variously described as “the second democratic upsurge” (Yadav, 2000) or “India’s Silent Revolution” (Jaffrelot, 2003) - of a range of caste groups, from Dalits to OBCs, and Most Backward Classes (MBCs).

## **CONTESTING THE IDEA AND EXPERIENCE OF RESERVATION**

Quotas are seen widely as unfair, and are condemned for punishing innocent upper castes for the damage done in the past, reinforcing caste lines rather than striving for a caste-free society, and for exempting Dalits from the rigours of market competition. Critics argue that reservations replace one form of discrimination (against Dalits) with another, equally pernicious form (against general category students or workers). There is a view, especially among the upper castes, that they are benefiting a generation whose parents have already moved up in the social structure and have been able to give them benefits denied to other, much poorer and more remote young people. There is also a belief that unqualified students are displacing highly qualified students in the race to the top of the educational heap. Many who share this view argue strenuously that the application of reservations will destroy the competitiveness of the Indian economy and drive away foreign investors because of the privileges insured by reservation. Hence they fuse personal exclusion with a national downfall in the making.

Broadly speaking, Dalits find these perspectives unconvincing. They instead argue that the most powerful special privileges actually accrue to high caste Hindus who can tap into exclusive social networks, bank on the cultural capital their families bequeath to them, or pay the bribes that are demanded by employers for access to jobs. Dalits from remote areas see themselves as doubly disadvantaged, by caste bias and by poverty. They struggle out of rural areas burdened by social isolation, ill equipped in terms of cultural capital to navigate an urban megalopolis like Delhi, lacking social networks that more privileged castes rely on. The sections of the backward classes who are said to corner the benefits are consistently identified by their opponents as caste clusters, subcastes or sub-subcastes. The first Backward Classes Report (Government of India 1956) already distinguished between the ‘backward’ and the ‘more backward’.

Quotas in higher education not only enable the ascent of Dalits in the university world, it literally enabled them to “open their mouths,” meaning speak their minds and “go to the centre of society,” where they can “meet other people...and get a platform” (Deshpande and Newman, 2007). Introducing them to another world and a different future breaks the silence imposed by marginality, caste prejudice (enforced by atrocities (targeted violence against Dalits, such as beating, rape of Dalit women, destruction of their assets, murder and so on, especially in rural areas) and poverty.

For Dalit students, the reservations policy is nothing more than a form of social engineering designed to address centuries of oppression and discrimination, extreme inequities in the distribution of educational opportunity, and the formation of a huge class of Indian citizens who are not equipped to compete without this assistance. These are not matters of history. Dalits cite countless examples from their own experience where they have been interrogated about their caste identities, castigated by prospective employers for their support of reservations, subjected to harassment or disrespect, and denied jobs (as far as they know) solely on account of their caste background. As long as this injustice persists, they argue, reservations will be needed. The policy levels the playing field at the vital choke points of social mobility. (Thorat:2004)

It would be incorrect to portray all upper-castes as unanimously against reservations. There are upper castes, both in universities and outside, for whom equality is a high principle and the barriers to achieving it for historically oppressed peoples clear enough. They embrace the purpose of reservation and see in it the possibilities of upward mobility. Among these supporters, there are differences of opinion nonetheless about the effectiveness of reservations for some of the same reasons that critics voice: lower castes' high drop-out rates. The lesson to be learned for these more progressive voices, though, is not to abandon reservations, but re-double efforts to address educational inequality at much younger ages. Without a massive commitment to improving primary school education, they argue, we cannot really expect reservations to succeed. If not for reasons of equity, then for reasons of efficiency, differential investment is required.

Those favouring the preferential policies would give an array of beneficial effects such as that preferential policies provide a direct flow of valuable resources to the historically deprived ones in larger measure than they would otherwise enjoy; that compensatory policies provide for participation in decision making by those who effectively represent the interest of that section of the population which would otherwise be unrepresented or neglected (Galanter: 1992) that, by affording opportunities for participation and well being, preferences promote feelings of belongingness and loyalty among the beneficiaries, thereby promoting the social and political integration of these groups into Indian society; that preference induce in others an awareness that the beneficiary groups are participants in Indian life whose interests and views have been taken into account and adjusted to; that preferences permit forms of action that promote pride, self respect, sense of achievement and personal efficacy that enable the beneficiaries to contribute to national development as willing partners; that by broadening opportunities, preferences stimulate the acquisition of skill and resources needed to compete successfully in open competition, that by cultivating talents, providing opportunities and incentives and promoting their awareness and self consciousness, preferences enhance the capacity of the beneficiary groups to undertake organised collective action; that by increasing the visibility of the beneficiary groups, promoting their placement in strategic locations and emphasising the national commitment to remedy their conditions, preferences serve as a stimulus and catalyst of enlarged efforts for their uplift and inclusion; that preferences compensate for and help to offset the accumulated disablement resulting from past deprivations of advantages and opportunities; that by reducing tangible disparities among groups and directing attention to mundane rather than ritual development of a secular society and that, preferences contribute to national development by providing incentives, opportunities and resources to utilise neglected talent.(Galanter: 1992)

The other side does not have dearth of arguments too, they would argue that the resources are enjoyed by a small group of the intended beneficiaries and do not benefit the groups as a whole; (BCR: ) that by creating new interests which diverge from those of the beneficiaries, preferences obstruct accurate representation of their interests; that by emphasising the separateness of these groups, preferences reduce their opportunities for common participation; that preferences frustrate others by what they consider unfair favouritism and educate them to regard the beneficiaries as separate elements who enjoy their own facilities and have no claim on general public facilities; that preferences subject these groups to manipulation by others, aggravate their dependency and undermine their sense of dignity, pride, self sufficiency and personal efficacy; (Singh vs Punjab, AIR:1999)that preferences provide artificial protection which blunts the development and skills and resources needed to succeed without them; that by making them dependent, blunting the development of talent, undermining self respect, preferences lessen the capacity for organised effort on their own behalf; that by projecting an image of comprehensive governmental protection and preferment, preferences stir the resentment of others, (Khanna: 1994) allaying their concern and undermining initiative for measures on behalf of the beneficiary groups; that these arrangements created vested interests in their continuation, while discouraging the development of skills, resources and attitudes that would enable the beneficiaries prosper without special treatment; that preferences place an unfair handicap on individuals who are deprived of opportunities they deserve on merit; that by recognising and stimulating group identity, preferences perpetuate invidious distinctions,(Galanter:1992) there by undermining secularism and that preferences impede development by misallocation of resources lowering of morale and incentive and waste of talent.

## **THE RECENT AGITATIONS**

1. Gujjars in Rajasthan have been agitating for reservation since 2007. Conceding a long standing demand of Gujjars, the Rajasthan state assembly passed by voice vote the Rajasthan Special Backward Classes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions in the State and of Appointments and Posts in Services under the State) Bill, 2015. Special backward classes include castes such as Gujjars, Banjara, and Gadiya Lohar, among others. The reservation in respect of the annual permitted strength for admission into educational institutions and courses in the state and for appointments and posts in the services under the state for special backward classes shall be five percent.

The Rajasthan Economically Backward Classes (Reservation of Seats in Educational Institutions in the State and of Appointments and Posts in Services under the State) Bill, 2015, passed in the state assembly, specifically defines "Economically Backward Classes" as people not included in any other category of reservation. The bill provides for the reservation of seats in educational institutions in the state and of appointments and posts in the services under the state in favour of the economically backward classes to the extent of 14 percent."The agitation was a long standing demand from the poorest classes of the unreserved categories, who claimed that due to their economic weakness they were unable to compete with the other affluent classes, due to which they were becoming socially and educationally backward. (The Hindu: 2015). The two bills -- reservation to economically backward classes and special backward classes -- bring the total reservation in the state to 68 percent.

2. The Patels or Patidars, in Gujrat, who constitute about 15 per cent of the State's population, are an economically and politically dominant upper caste. As successful farmers, as small and big industrialists, as traders as well as non-resident Gujaratis, spread practically all over the world, they should be the last to demand reservation. The Patel agitation at present, however, seems to be demanding precisely this. Or, if read carefully, the protesters are demanding the removal of caste-based reservation and its replacement with income-based reservation. (The Hindu: 2015)

The Patel rallies for reservation have been widespread across the State and significantly large in many towns and

cities. Though it appears to be an urban movement, rural areas are not totally excluded. The rallies have also spurred other caste rallies and resulted in inter-caste conflicts and tensions. Though there seem to be many weaknesses in the leadership of the agitation and lack of clarity in its objectives, the agitation needs to be taken seriously because it is a warning of the shape of things to come - not only in Gujarat but also other parts of the country. The agitation has emerged out of the frustrations of the youth on two major counts. First, the existing reservation policy that has failed to assimilate lowest castes/tribes within the mainstream economy and society, has created a sense of dissatisfaction and injustice among those who are denied the benefits of reservation. And second, the much-discussed Gujarat model of development has failed miserably in creating adequate employment opportunities for the growing labour force in the State. This lacuna has particularly affected the educated youth who are unable to find suitable work in spite of the rapid growth of the economy.

3. The Jats, a dominant farming community in Haryana were agitating to be counted among Other Backward Classes periodically since 2009. At least 20 people died and more than 200 were injured as Jats went on a frenzy of destruction in mid-February to demand reservations in government jobs for their community. Over about ten days, buildings and vehicles were torched and railway routes and roadways blockaded around Haryana and particularly in Jhajjar and Rohtak. The Jat stir has also shaken up India Inc with Maruti having to stop production and Delhi's water supply being hit. Some estimates put the loss to the state at Rs. 20,000 crore. The government's willingness to capitulate before the violent agitators sets a bad precedent. The Jat agitation is part of a nationwide pattern where dominant upper castes are increasingly demanding downward caste mobility and reservation benefits. Kapus in Andhra Pradesh and Marathas in Maharashtra have similar reclassification demands. The recent agitation maintains that as the creamy layer of the lowest castes and tribes have cornered these benefits to a considerable extent, the policy has ended up as a tool that discriminates against the high caste youths in favour of the low caste youths, sometimes coming from the same economic background. The non-poor, middle income groups of SC/ST/OBC who are seen to be the beneficiaries of reservations. The tool of reservation has failed miserably in removing caste differences and has promoted the caste divide and caste conflicts.

## **CONCLUSION**

Given the structural inequalities and exclusionary and discriminatory character of Indian society, the State has developed remedies against caste and ethnicity-based exclusion and discrimination and for empowerment of excluded groups, the SC/STs, which constitute about one-fifth of India's total population. The safeguards against exclusion and discrimination in the forms of legal measures and affirmative action cover public employment, public education and legislative seats and also other government amenities like public housing, etc. However, affirmative action policy in India is confined to the government sector only and the vast private sector is excluded from its jurisdiction. The Government has used some sort of an informal affirmative action policy in the private sector.

Over time, there has been considerable improvement in the share of SC/ST reservation and representation in government employment and educational institutions. The reservation in legislative bodies has also ensured the SC/STs some space in the executive and decision making process. The impact of formal reservation policy in government sector and informal affirmative action policy in private sector has led to some improvement in the human development of SC/STs. However, as compared to non SC/ST population of the country, the rate of improvement has been rather slow. And as result, despite positive improvements, the disparities in human development between SC/STs and non SC/ST continue even today.

During the course of the implementation of reservation policy, some problems have become apparent. Although the Government has taken steps to improve the implementation of reservation policy, there has been resistance to the

policy in indirect forms and as result, its success is uneven across sectors and department. Reservations is close to the population mark of SC/STs in lower categories of jobs, but lower than the population mark in case of high grade positions and technical education institutions. Owing to the indirect nature of resistance to implementation of reservation policy, the extension and the percolation of the reservation policy to several government sectors has been slow. The other issue that recently acquired prominence is the demand made by SC/ST groups to extend the affirmative action policy of the Government to the private sector employment and educational institutions and other private sector spheres as well; this is under active consideration by the Government of India.

The societal discrimination and exclusion in multiple spheres and violent opposition by the powerful high caste civil society and also some organs of the state drastically reduce SC/ST freedom and capacity to enjoy their civil, political and economic rights and equal opportunities. The failure of entitlements due to caste-based exclusion is of considerable magnitude. Empirical evidence proves that, among others, caste/untouchability-based exclusion and discrimination of SCs and isolation and exclusion of STs in the past and continuation in the present through its residual traditional attributes contribute to the low level of human development and high level of deprivation of the SC/STs. The continuing exclusion induced deprivation of the disadvantaged groups - the SC/STs - indicate that addressing problems of social exclusion is a more difficult challenge than enforcing an anti-poverty policy. Social and cultural sources of exclusion in economic, civil and political spheres - including, low self esteem, stigma, discrimination and denial of citizenship - are rooted in the informal social structure and the institution of caste and untouchability. Social exclusion, discrimination and untouchability are widespread, not only, in the private sector, but also prevalent in the public domain governed by the State. In this context, the inclusion of excluded groups, then, becomes a somewhat different goal than social inclusion of only materially deprived people. Poverty, even when broadly defined, as exclusion from the means necessary for full participations in normal activities of society, is largely a question of access to resources and services. Whereas, exclusion of groups or individuals is foremost, a denial of the right to equal opportunity, respect and development; such a curse affects even relatively better off members of the group facing social exclusion.

Clearly, the time has come to rethink our reservation policies that have ended up giving preference to more or less the same class of SC/ST/OBC in school/college admission, in jobs and in promotions as well as subsidies in innumerable programmes and schemes, leaving out the poorer sections among them at the bottom. The recent movements for reservation (Patels, Jats&Kapus) reflect two underlying trends. First, India's unaddressed jobs crisis which has transformed its demographic dividend into a demographic disaster. Economic policy must be indexed to job growth rather than GDP growth, reforms that grow jobs must be pushed through. These include radical labour reform which incentivise the creation of more jobs, facilitation of land acquisition by industry as well as educational reforms which radically improves the quality of public sector institutions while uninhibitedly inviting the private sector to play a greater role. Second, dominant farming agricultural communities are finding lesser returns in farming and are left behind in education (Times of India: 2016).

To sum up, caste quotas should not monopolise the notion of social justice. It needs to be replaced by a points-based system that give more weightage to economic deprivation. Reservations are not the answer, education and job growth are. India needs a new dialogue with all the stake holders on freezing or rolling back caste-based reservations, focussing instead on meritocracy, quality of education and job creation. Thus, effective implementation of affirmative action requires a strong political will so that actually needed people irrespective of caste, race and community can avail the reservation and get the opportunity to lead a dignified life.

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# INDIA- RUSSIA TIES: STANDING CHALLENGE OF CHANGING GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

India-Russia relations hinges on deep-rooted popular tradition in both countries. Whereas the Russians are fond of saying: “An old friend is worth two new ones”, the ancient Indian wisdom goes like: “Do not cut the thread of friendship; for, if it has to be tied again, a knot will remain”. These are the reasons why the mantras “Hindi-Rusi bhai-bhai” and “India-Russia relations have withstood the test of time”, so popular in political vocabulary, have not frayed as antique Mughal coins. These phrases are like enchanting shlokas from the Bhagvad Gita, sacred and timeless, like miraculous formulae whose vitality and relevance are tangibly proven by the entire history and dynamics of Indian-Russian ties, which have reached the level of special and privileged strategic partnership.

It is gratifying and inspiring that no domestic social and economic shocks or sweeping shifts in the international arena managed to shake the tradition of Indian-Russian friendship, to erode the national consensus that has grown up around it in both countries. Throughout decades our mutual ties, while acquiring new substance, have shaped themselves into a unique pattern of bilateral inter-governmental relations unparalleled in the diplomatic practice of the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Strong multidimensional cooperation with Russia has remained one of the top priorities of Indian foreign policy throughout all these years. The continuity of such an approach was established during the early years of India’s industrialization when the USSR assisted in constructing its first-borns - steel giants in Bhilai and Bokaro, also the antibiotics factory in Rishikesh and the computer lab in Bangalore. It was further enhanced by joint implementation of dozens of other projects, including the launch of the first Indian satellite “Aryabhata” and the first space journey of India’s citizen - Rakesh Sharma. Continuity persists in our joint plans, be it design and manufacture of the unrivalled supersonic cruise missiles BrahMos, state-of-the-art fifth

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generation fighter jet, construction of the world's safest units of NPP Kudankulam or preparation of the lunar expedition "Chandrayan-2". Strong and multifaceted cooperation manifests itself in the arrival of the razor-edge "Chakra", participation of Russian specialists in the Metro construction in Chennai or use of the Russian GLONASS space system in India.

### **INDO-RUSSIA RELATIONS IN THE COLD WAR ERA**

India and Russia shared a privileged partnership from 1947 to 1962. India under Prime Minister Nehru had trade and defense relations exclusively with erstwhile USSR as PM Nehru had adopted and followed Socialist pattern of society on the model of Russia virtually in all spheres. India had nothing to do with America or with any other Capitalist Country. Though in USSR there was state control under communist dictatorship of Stalin, there was good progress of common man of more than a dozen state, languages and cultures resulting in hundred percent employments, education of all communities and particularly old age care. In Feb 1955, Bulganin and Khrushchev, two important leaders of the world at that time visited India. They got warm welcome as no other leader from Europe or America had come to India after the Indian independence. Not only Nehru who was socialist but whole India was overjoyed and started feeling recognition of India as a big nation which had come into existence as an independent country only 7-8 years back.

During the India-China war in 1962, the USSR tried to be neutral between what it called 'brother China' and 'friend India', with the People's Republic of China seeing this as a betrayal of international communist solidarity on the part of the USSR, and a factor that reflected the growing Sino-Soviet split. In the early 1970s both Indian and Soviet leaders looked on the emerging US-Chinese rapprochement as a serious threat to their security. Their response had been in 1971 with the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Cooperation, which provided immediate consultation in case of military action against parties to the Treaty. During the India-Pakistan war in 1971, the USSR took a firm position in favour of India and sent military ships to the Indian Ocean, which countered the 7th Fleet ships of USA. A positive outcome in favour of India and emergence of Bangladesh established a trusted partnership between India and the USSR. When USSR invaded Afghanistan in 1979, India reciprocated by not criticizing on the actions of the USSR. But as there was what is known as 'thought control' and evils like sending to Siberia thousands of dissenters imprisoning them, torturing many and killing others. USSR disintegrated under Gorbachov and many states like Ukraine in west and Kirgizstan in east got independence. Thereafter independent country Russia started following in stages freedom of speech, free trade and enterprise and within a few years ceased to be communist.

After the collapse of USSR, India completely abandoned socialistic pattern of society that had led to the so called Inspector Raj and no growth of GDP for almost 20 years. That is why India fully adopted free trade and development of Industries by private enterprise. As a result India's GDP started growing from 5 per cent to 8 per cent per annum. Simultaneously we had improved relations with non-communist Russia since then.

After decline of the USSR, bilateral relations in the 1990s went through a period of uncertainty. This was the time when Russian priorities shifted towards domestic economic and political issues. On the foreign policy side, Russia started to look cordially towards USA and Europe. India also, on the other hand, preoccupied with its domestic economic crisis had to look towards the Western countries because the new Russia was economically dependent on the West and it had lack of the resources for Third World regimes. However, President Boris Yeltsin visited India in 1993 and a new Treaty of Friendship was signed to replace the old Indo-Soviet treaty of 1971. He described India and Russia as 'natural partners' and didn't give the impression of a 'special relationship', which marked the Russian policy shift. Such neglect of India by Russia left a deep mark on Indian policy-makers. Now it was apparent that Russian adoption of Atlanticism had kept away its old policy of Eurasianism.

The scenario changed in 1998 when Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov mooted the idea of creating a Russia-India-China (RIC) triangle. The reason behind such proposal was that the assurances from the western countries, i.e. to

help Russia economically were not fulfilled. Therefore, Russia started to leave pro-Western foreign policy. Though the RIC triangle has substance but it didn't get a noteworthy attention because of the mutual suspicion between India and China.

## **INDO-RUSSIA RELATIONS IN THE PUTIN ERA**

In late 1999, Putin was declared as Yeltsin's successor as President. After the Yeltsin years, Putin was the major factor in re-vitalizing Indo-Russian closeness which has reached a stage where any change in the leadership in either country or closeness with any other country would not make much of a difference to their partnership. Since the signing of "Declaration on the India-Russia Strategic Partnership" in October 2000 (during the visit of President Vladimir Putin to India), India-Russia ties have acquired a qualitatively new character with enhanced levels of cooperation in almost all areas of the bilateral relationship including political, security, trade and economy, defense, science and technology and culture. Under the Strategic Partnership, several institutionalized dialogue mechanisms operate at both political and official levels to ensure regular interaction and follow up on cooperation activities. During the visit of Russian President to India in December 2010, the Strategic Partnership was elevated to the level of a "Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership".

Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh also agreed with his counterpart and stated in speech given during President Putin's 2012 visit to India, "President Putin is a valuable friend of India and the original architect of the India-Russia strategic partnership" (13<sup>th</sup> Indo-Russian Summit reaffirms time-tested ties: Russia & India Report). Both countries closely collaborate on matters of shared national interest which include the UN, BRICS, G20 and SCO where India has mere observer status and has been asked by Russia to become a full member. Russia also strongly supports India's desire for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council. Moreover, Russia has also expressed interest in joining SAARC with observer status in which India is a founding member.

Russia currently is only one of two countries in the world that has a mechanism for annual ministerial-level defense reviews with India. Almost every department of the Government of India attends it. Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission is the main body that conducts affairs at the governmental level between both countries. Some have described it as the steering committee of Indo-Russia relations. It is divided into two parts covering trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation.

## **NARENDRA MODI'S VISIT TO RUSSIA**

In late December 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi made his first state visit to Russia to take part in the 16<sup>th</sup> annual bilateral summit. Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin used the summit to review bilateral ties across a number of areas, including security, trade, commerce, science and technology, defense, and energy. Talking about the relationship, Modi described Russia as "a strong and reliable friend", while Putin expressed his happiness about "developing the privileged strategic partnership between India and Russia".

This rhetoric, along with the signing of sixteen agreements, is being seen as very significant in sustaining and expanding India-Russia ties. One major step taken is deepening of India's defense partnership with Russia. On the eve of Modi's visit to Russia, the Indian government announced the purchase of five S-400 supersonic air defense systems from Russia, costing around \$6 billion. The two sides also agreed that the Kamov 226 helicopter would be manufactured in India. These defense agreements are important for both the countries.

This renewed engagement between the two countries will infuse the relationship with some much-needed trust and confidence. In particular, recent defense and other agreements have sent a strong message that New Delhi continues to view relations with Moscow as an indispensable element of India's foreign policy. Second, India and Russia agreed to strengthen the defense partnership in line with the "Make in India" program. So, while only the public sector has been involved in defense cooperation between the two countries to date, and the Russian defense establishment has treated

India as a market for licensed production, the new initiatives will encourage joint manufacturing of defense products in India and motivate the private sector to play a role in developing a strong defense manufacturing base in India. This will ultimately reduce India's reliance on defense imports.

It should be emphasized that "Make in India" also aims at having India emerge as an essential player in the global defense market. India is forecast to spend \$250 billion over the next decade upgrading its military and Russia wants to seize the opportunity to become a major part of this mission, expressing its readiness to work jointly with India on defense manufacturing. The boost to defense engagement will also help India contain the growing engagement between Russia and Pakistan.

India's defense ties with the erstwhile Soviet Union and later with Russia were a major pillar of bilateral ties. However, in recent times there has been deep strain in the relationship as well. Russian strategists and diplomats have made much over the loss of some Indian defense deals to the US, Israel and other countries. On the other hand, Russia's failure to deliver the aircraft carrier Admiral Gorshkov on time annoyed New Delhi because it forced India to pay Russia \$2.34 billion, against the originally agreed price of \$947 million. Russia's decision to supply Pakistan with the Mi-35 Hind attack helicopters and Klimov RDP93 engines for the JF-17 has also alarmed the Indian defense establishment.

## **ECONOMIC BOOST**

Russia's economy is struggling, a result of the economic sanctions imposed on it by the West over its incursions into Ukraine, exacerbated by a sharp decline in oil prices and the costs of Moscow's military involvement in Syria. The Putin administration sees India - one of the fastest growing economies in the world - as a country that could alleviate Russia's economic problems. From India's point of view, its "Make in India" initiative would welcome Russian companies from the public and private sectors. In fact, Russian firms have shown a willingness to invest in India in construction, major infrastructure projects such as dedicated freight corridors and industrial clusters, smart cities, and engineering services, sharing technologies and skills. At the same time, Indian companies are exploring major investment options in Russia, especially in natural resources such as coal, fertilizers, hydrocarbons, minerals, and rare earth metals.

India and Russia have also decided to institutionalize the CEO's Forum, which will meet twice a year - once in India and the other in Russia. The two countries also agreed to liberalize business travel. These and other measures should help boost bilateral trade, currently at around \$10 billion, to a targeted \$30 billion over the next ten years. While earlier this year, India's ONGC Videsh Limited acquired a 15 percent stake in Rosneft's Vankorneft Field, Indian companies have also shown interest in investing in Russia's hydrocarbon sector, while there are expectations of an early finalization of new investment proposals between Rosneft and Oil India Limited.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

Counter terrorism is another area where Modi and Putin found a convergence of interest. The two leaders strongly condemned terrorism in all its forms, stressing the need for an effective global effort in dealing with the terrorist menace. They also called for the elimination, once and for all, of all terrorist "safe havens", presumably referring to Pakistan. India and Russia also share concerns about the aggravation of the security situation in Afghanistan, including along its borders.

While India has in the past implicitly supported Russia on the issue of Syria by not joining the West in criticizing Moscow's actions there, this time Modi openly shared Russia's concerns over developments in the stricken country. In fact, the two leaders expressed a common understanding that the civil war in Syria cannot be solved by the use of force, but rather through political and diplomatic initiatives. India's stance on Syria will certainly help cement its ties with Russia, countering a growing feeling among Russian strategic experts and analysts that India was not coming forward to support Russia in difficult times.

A sharp rise in Russia-China defense ties, the assertive foreign policy of a rising China in the Indo-Pacific, the US-Pakistan relationship, and the China-Pakistan nexus will all encourage India to continue to strengthen ties with Russia. New Delhi also needs Moscow's support in the former's bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council, and for its participation in other multilateral organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

## **CONCLUSION**

The post-cold war era has thrown new challenges to Russia and these challenges are self-imposed, in the sense that they are certainly the product of a new system, i.e. democracy. India is also a big democracy; hence there will not be a dialogical blockade. India could ably teach Russia as to how democracy could be absorbed. There is probably no other country in the world having as rich a democracy as the Indians from whom the Russians should learn the experiences of democracy. Russia may not be having enough military strength to its ties with traditional friends but it should defiantly have moral and ethical strength to support its traditionally influenced region like India.

What one could infer in the end is that the post-cold war era is important for both India and Russia in all respects. The traditional integrity has to be related in all cost to keep them protected, secured and nourished. The phrase coined by Yeltsin that India and Russia are "natural partners" has inseparable significance and implies indivisible indo-Russia relations in the time ahead without thinking on any time-centric relations. India and Russia should tactfully act as catalysts with integrity and dignity in the post cold war era.

On the basis of strong historical relations between India and Russia it can be stated that traditionally close cooperation in the military technical field has been a major pillar of their strategic partnership and a reflection of the trust and confidence that has been built up between the two countries over the last half century. It has been recognized that considerable potential exists for mutually beneficial investments by the two countries in the privatization programmes and both have aimed at fostering technological innovation in their respective economies. This indicates vast market opportunities and scope for development of wide range of economic sectors without much resource constraint. In changing South Asian scenario, India and Russia are expected to remain potential partners strengthening the old traditions of friendship.

India and Russia both have transcended the level of mere regional powers. The sources of their strength are different: India has a dynamic economy and favourable demographics, whereas Russia has a superior nuclear arsenal and vast natural resources. How they use their strength for the betterment of both the countries stands to be tested.

It is clear that India-Russia relations remain vital for both countries amid a changing regional and global security environment. While Modi's visit has set in motion the process of strengthening bilateral ties, more will need to be done if the relationship is to play the role both countries clearly expect.

## **END NOTES**

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## Book Review

Sidharth Mishra

### DRAWING ON PAST TO PLAN FOR FUTURE

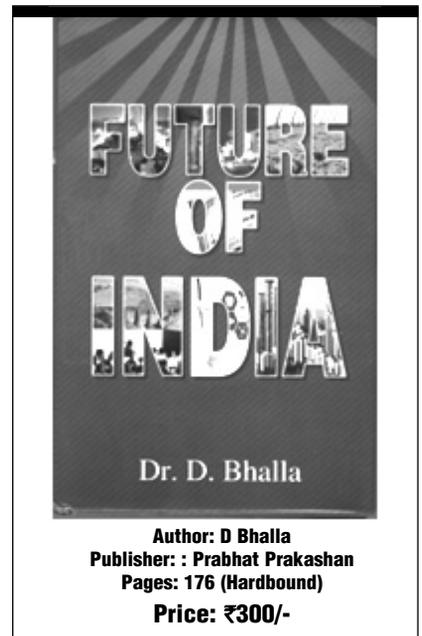
Governing India is an exhilarating experience. Howsoever they may be criticised, the fact remains that those in the Indian Administrative service (IAS) form the lynchpin of this governance structure. In course of service they become part of power structure at every level from the grassroots to the Raisina Hills. In the bargain they get huge exposure to people they govern, the challenges administration faces and the delivery system that has to be created. With such huge experience each of the members of the IAS becomes a storehouse of experience and information.

However, there are not very many who go onto share the experience through a book. And among those who do pen their memoirs they seldom escape the greed of creating sensationalism about their interactions with powers that be. D Bhalla, Secretary, Lok Sabha, however, has attempted a tome of different genre. He has tried sharing the challenges at remotest possible locations and then put them national perspective.

Future of India one to the past, then analyses the present challenges and finally provides a roadmap for a better India. From economy to education and from agriculture to tourism, every facet and every colour of India finds a place here. Sectoral analysis of economy, education, industry, infrastructure, etc. gives a perspective of where does India stand today, what it can achieve tomorrow and for that what should be our plan of action.

The book starts with India's position in the world in which he has analysed how India is perceived by the rest of the globe and its consistent strive towards becoming a global superpower - political as well as economic. He believes that economic liberalisation was a big step towards global participation of Indian economy but the benefits of liberalisation are yet to reach the common man due to internal policy inconsistencies.

He has identified JAM trinity - Jan Dhan, Aadhar and Mobile - as a potential strategy to bring people closer to governance. In the "Economy" chapter, he traces the roots of economic reform in India, bottlenecks in implementation of



reforms and how investors' sentiment is changing towards India. Infrastructure is one area which finds special mention and he has rightly stressed that India cannot become a super power if infrastructure and power sectors will not be improved. Infrastructure is a link that will connect people to their government.

Oil and gas sector challenges and how the government of the day is committed to overcome those challenges have been suitably analysed. You will find a viable PPP model in his book which gives a practical insight how the PPP model can be revived and made effective. In the agriculture section, emphasis has been on improving the condition of farmers, agrarian export and to develop India as an international destination for processed food. He has analysed in detail how technology and innovation can boost Indian agriculture.

Urbanisation and health have been identified as the core areas where government must emphasize for building a healthy and smart India. Bhalla has tried to establish the link between education and employment and role of education in character building of modern India. Qualitative improvement in education and skill development have been emphasised as engines of economic growth.

His analysis of education is a good balance between traditional values of Indian society and the needs of modern India. Sustainable development and tourism find a special place in the publication. Low cost and community based tourism has been emphasised for the community participation and employment potential. The six strategies outlined in the book, if adopted by the government, will take the tourism sector to a new high.

Belonging to Nagaland cadre, Bhalla has served in the north-eastern state for nearly three decades. His love for the north-east has been reflected in his book. Geographical beauty of the landscape, economic potential, social and cultural importance of the region and above all, the importance of north-east for the rest of India have been well encapsulated in the publication.

Readers will also find many international examples of how projects have been implemented successfully and benefited the common man with action for replication of such successful ideas for a better India. Knowledge must have its application to enhance its value. Solutions offered in the book practical but with far reaching positive implications. "Future of India" is basically an insight of the bureaucrat and compilation of his experiences and thoughts during his three decade stint in bureaucracy.

In fact the book can be best described as sector-wise the overview of Indian economy. What makes it unique is that it is written by an administrator of more than three decade's experience, who unlike majority of bureaucrats, have given his opinion on different issues freely.

The author begins with an attempt to assess the position of India in the world order. In the process he has touched upon the proactive role India has been playing since the nineties - MDGs, reforming the UN, BRICS, and the current negotiation towards SDGs. While describing the circumstances that led to the unipolar world order, he compares two emerging leaders - India and China who are certain to play important role in near future. While highlighting India's achievements the author has not shied away to point out the constraints.

Before going for sector-wise appraisal of Indian Economy, the author very lucidly accounted for the economic reforms that started in 1990s. The chapter gives a clear idea of the circumstances that led to Economic Reforms and their progress and prospects. The author has devoted one chapter to infrastructure which is of critical importance to any economy. The writer has placed particular emphasis on two sectors - Power and Oil and Natural gas. Providing information on Government initiatives, he has dwelt intelligibly the challenges and opportunities.

The author rightly gives special emphasis to tourism in the chapter "Tourism - the Great multiplier" in which he argues that without sustainability aspect taken care of, tourism or the whole concept of growth or development will be useless. The only solution is to look how sustainability is applied to tourism and national development as a whole. The author advocates greater role for the local community in the tourism development. The writer suggests that sustainable tourism strategies must be formulated macro as well as micro levels.

The author has made a strong case for Public Private Partnership in the sectors like Railways, Power, Higher Education, etc. He has cited the examples of UK, Australia, Brazil and Philippines in support of his point of view. Dealing with agriculture, education and health issues, Dr Bhalla not only records India's progress in these fields, but also highlights challenges.

The author has shown his deep concern for the ill effects of heavily and fast growing urbanization in India which has resulted in disparities. He attributes faulty planning for this and suggests reform in our town planning approach. His chapter on North East is a comprehensive socio-economic study of the region. While highlighting various problems of the region the author offers possible steps to mainstream the region with the rest.

In the preface the author has stated that it is not just the macro level policy changes that need a change but there is an inherent need to expedite small things so relevant in each sector. True to his assertion the author has dealt micro level issues and recommended action at local levels which he believes can change the face of our nation.

The USP of the book is the simple way the author has presented his appraisal. He has drawn heavily from his rich and varied experience as an administrator. Unlike many books in the field this book is not overloaded with tables, statistics and too much of economic data. The author has very selectively incorporated appropriate data that are needed to construct and support his arguments. These data used so coherently that the readers - scholars as well as ordinary persons would find the book informative, easy to comprehend and an interesting read.

## Book Review

Deepak Singh

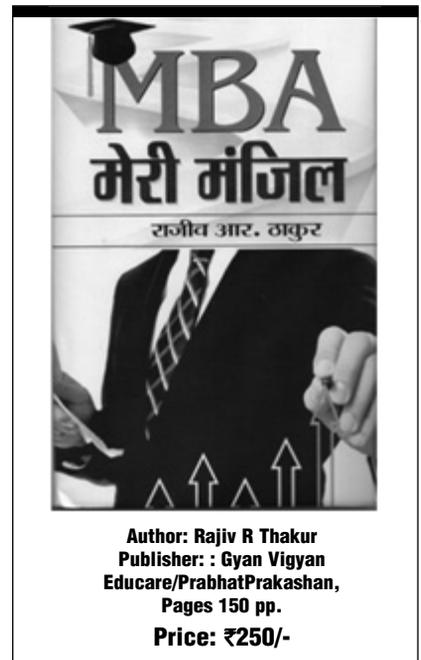
### A CAREER COUNSELOR FOR MANAGEMENT STUDENTS

**W**ondering what to do next for a youth who has just crossed tenth or twelfth grade in India is a million-dollar question. The much feared element of the unknown often rears its head in a search for the right career choice. A lack of awareness about existing career options and emerging professions in sun-shine industries, especially amongst youths in non-metro, tier-II and tier-III cities forms a Himalayan barrier to match educational qualification, skills, values and interests to a right career option. Advises at times, may come raining from all sides but how to choose one that is qualified, is a daunting task and confusing too. In Indian context, social conditioning also substitutes for conscious choice, and students in sweet ignorance just fall into a career path they would have otherwise not tread.

At this point, career guidance books may come handy. Stepping into the book stores may land up with shelves upon shelves of career guidance books promising to close the gap between the day's job and a dream job. But these quick-fixes may not assure a passionate future career and are often boring, farcical and a complete waste of time.

A promising career guidance book coming out this April of 2016 is MBA Meri Manzil, by an academican of eminence, Dr. Rajiv R. Thakur who has seen many summers in the management arena, both as an academican and industry stalwart. Many students may not afford the time or the money to seek an actual career expert advice and this book offers the next best thing. This companion book involves a lot of asking career guiding questions, making you do the work, rather than offering you the answers on a platter.

This book is written in easy-understandable lingua franca, Hindi, with a missionary zeal to out-reach to youths of India who are often left behind the race to glory because of linguistic barrier on one hand and acute lack of right information related to management as a career option. It offers its readers an expert guidance and insights into popular and emerging career option in management field. Written by an expert equipped with over 20 years of rich domain experience, this book



turns out to be a must read companion for young minds looking forward to an informed decision on career choice.

The book is thoughtfully crafted in 3 different sections spread across 10 chapters. The first section revolves around the role of family in building an eco system of progressive thoughts and visioning the future of children as well as different career options currently knocking the door step of youths today. The author builds upon the role of family in career choices in a very subtle fashion, anchoring upon the pre-requisite of equipping with contemporary skills and knowledge for a successful career in knowledge economy of India. The career options across different private and government sectors and other abundant opportunities in emerging creative fields have been explored, which sets the tone for the need to equip oneself with professional competencies.

The next section is dedicated to disseminating the essential information to navigate the career in management field. The seven chapters are light houses of information to guide a young sailor navigate the ship through the tested channels of corporate dream. While elaborating on importance of MBA as a stepping stone towards a corporate dream, the chapters are a serious attempt to guide aspirants on how to prepare for entrance tests, educational eligibility, when to apply, scholarships available, career prospects, nature of work and job expectations at different managerial levels, emoluments. Plus this book is packed with up-to-date information on the relevant criteria to use for choosing where to study, course details, areas of specializations, and multiple other aspects of close relevance. A special chapter has been dedicated on challenges of two years of corporate training at campus, importance of summer internship, placement training and process for holistic development towards industry-readiness.

In the third section which is my personal favourite, Dr Thakur builds a compelling must read insights of people of eminence from across all shades of economy, PSU, MNCs, and entrepreneurship. They shared their real-life examples and thoughts on emerging role of management studies in improving productivity on one hand and innovations on other.

As an icing to the cake, the book offers a self-help section on websites for placement, ranking of institutions, tip on designing your curriculum-vitae and a few leading B-schools of India. This adds to the credibility of the book before the reader signs off on relieved note.

It is an amazing piece of writing which though keeps youth as its audience, is also recommended for the parents, B-schools, corporate and other stake-holders. It offers its readers a flexibility to open up the mind set for change to happen.

Dr. Thakur asserts that for playing big, one does not have to lead to more money, fame or conventional leader's role. Instead, he encourages the reader to figure your own field of being big- which means reconnecting to your own creative dream, committing to a corporate captaincy or deciding to start a business.

This book is authored in a reader-friendly style for students who face pivotal questions related to their higher studies but feel paralysed by the lack of information on career choices. It is a step-by-step roadmap to help them gather information, gain clarity and become confident of an informed decision.

The one shade of grey may be no direct reference to the sources of information for self-study and preparation techniques for youths who may not have easy access to competition preparatory study materials in their respective towns.

Though this book is tailored for youths in small towns but is equally useful for urban populace. MBA MeriManzil is a guide for youths eager to get clarity about their life's corporate aspirations and a passion to achieve more, but in a personally authentic way.

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2. Contributors must provide affiliations and complete postal and e-mail addresses with their articles.
3. All articles should be typed in Times New Roman, Font Size 14 for the running text. complete manuscript should be e-mailed to the Editor. No hard copy is required.
4. All articles must be accompanied by keywords and an abstract of 150-200 words. Notes should be numbered serially and presented at the end of the article.
5. Use single quotes throughout. Double quotes only used within single quotes. Spelling of quotations should not be changed.
6. Use '20th century' '1990s'. Spell out numbers from one to nine, 10 and above to remain in figures. However, for exact measurements, use only figures (5km, 6percent, not%). Use thousands and millions, not lakhs and crores.
7. Tables and figures to be indicated by number serially,. Source for figures and tables should be mentioned, and permission should be obtained whenever necessary.
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### Of the women, for the women

By Sidharth Mishra



Travelling to Bihar last week, the first after Nitish Kumar introduced total prohibition in the state, there was liquor talk buzzing all around. This was, in fact, the first time I heard people discuss liquor so openly in the state. Unlike Punjab, Bachchus has never part of Bihari pantheon, especially among the Bhadraklok.

Liquor in Bihar in the pre-Janata Dal days was limited to consumption in a few clubs (to which membership was very restrictive), a few restaurants with bar license (that families avoided visiting), and the homes of a few "independent" families. With large joint families still the norm back then, open consumption of liquor within the house too was a rarity.

I was brought up in a nuclear family and my father was a doctor, a community identified for prescribing *dawa* (medicines) and consuming *daru* (liquor). My father's generation of doctors, in large numbers, went to the United Kingdom for specialised training and came back with sufficient exposure of the British life and ways - the taste of quality whisky

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### Of positive news and honey bee reporters

By Sidharth Mishra



The prime minister has done it again. In less than two years he has issued another advisory to the media. Last Sunday during his monthly radio talk "Maan Ki Baat" on All India Radio, he said print and television media should carry positive stories to spread an atmosphere of positivity that inspires the nation to do well. During the talk, he even "appreciated" the fact that some newspapers and channels have started carrying positive stories in certain time slots. Prime Minister also cited the example of former President A P J Abdul Kalam who used to say that newspapers should carry only positive stories in their front pages. He said focusing on the good will help erase the bad.

Now Mr. Prime Minister, in this era and time, how is it possible to cover only positive stories on the front pages? If the media industry went by the advice of the late President it would be in jeopardy. However, we'll come to that later. First, the earlier advisory which the Prime Minister had issued 16 months back at the platinum jubilee function of a prominent publication from the North-East, "The Assam Tribune". Prime Minister had then said that journalists should be like a honey bee and not a housefly.

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### What's in a name? Stupid politics!

By Sidharth Mishra



*What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet.*  
Romeo and Juliet (Act II, Scene 2)

The famous lines by the Bard of Avon have echoed through the columns of our newspapers every time the name of a city, a city square, or a road changed. Many years ago, I recall, BJP spokesperson and Member of Parliament MJ

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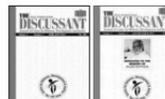
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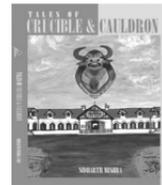


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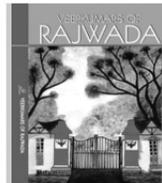


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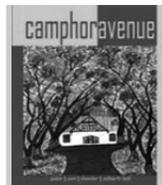
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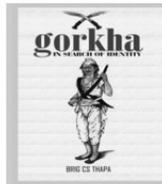
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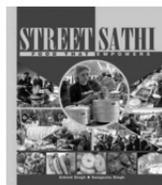
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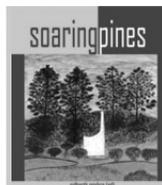
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**SIDHARTH MISHRA**