

FEBRUARY 2023

PUBADPEDIA

**A MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS MAGAZINE FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION OPTIONAL
(UPSC CSE)**

An Initiative By Rahul Shakya

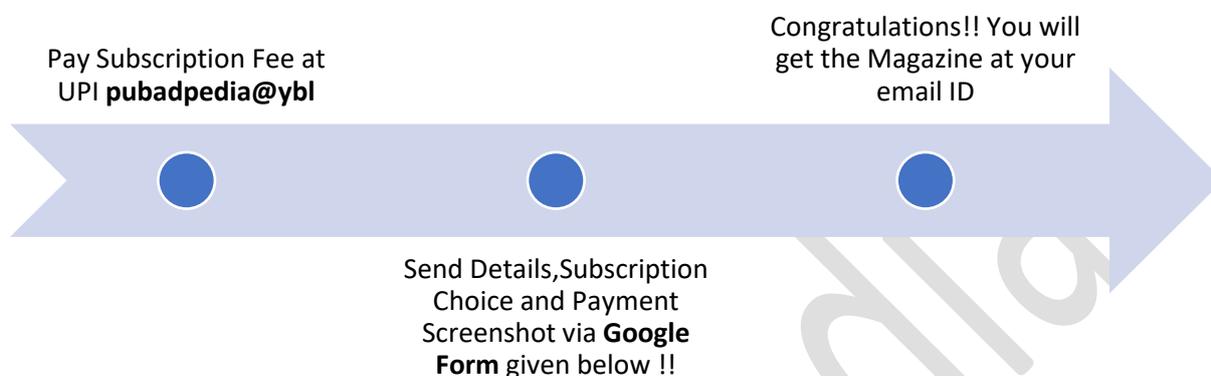
S. No	CONTENTS
1	INTRODUCTION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hirschman Model of Exit, Voice and Loyalty
2	ADMIMINISTRATIVE THINKERS/BEHAVIOUR <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judicial Majoritarianism and Judicial Hunches in Decision Making <i>Khula</i> Certificate and Riggs Prismatic Society
3	ORGANISATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Regulation
4	ACCOUNTABILITY & CONTROL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Role of Foreign Media in ensuring accountability Charge-Sheet Scrutiny
5	DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fall of Vikasvaad – Centralization
6	FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goldilocks on Fiscal Deficit Off-Budget borrowings – a State wise look Audit Data Standardisation
7	PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION AND CIVIL SERVICES <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media Rules for Police @ UP
8	PUBLIC POLICY <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skin in the game approach
9	PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK <ul style="list-style-type: none"> North Star of Democracy Protect the Little Man in Democracy Social Media and Democratization Post-Cleavage Political Parties
10	PUBLIC SECTOR UNDERTAKINGSs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The status and proceeds of disinvestment
11	UNION GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discipline and Discussion Defamation v/s Accountability
12	RURAL DEVELOPMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Urban Bias in Rural Development Rural Tourism
13	URBAN DEVELOPMENT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reigning over the capital, from above
14	DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case Study

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MESSAGE FROM THE AUTHOR



I am honored to present to you the latest edition of the PubAdPedia Magazine for UPSC CSE. As the author of this edition, I am excited to share with you some of the latest updates and insights in the field of public administration. I have endeavored to bring you "insightful articles, analysis, and the most crucial linkage between content (current affairs) and context (static theory/thinkers) on various topics related to the public administration optional for civil services examination.

Our aim is to equip you with the knowledge and analytical skills that you need to succeed in the UPSC CSE exam and beyond. The articles and features in this magazine have been carefully curated to reflect the latest trends and developments in the field of public administration, and we hope that they will be both informative and engaging.

As an author, I am always keen to hear from my readers, and I would be delighted to receive your feedback on the content of this magazine. Please feel free to write to us with your comments, suggestions, or queries, and we will do our best to respond in a timely and helpful manner.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere hope that this edition of the PubAdPedia Magazine will serve as a valuable resource for all those who are preparing for public administration optional. I am confident that you will find much to learn and appreciate in these pages.

Rahul Shakya
NET-JRF Holder (Public Administration)
University Gold Medalist (Mechanical Engineering)

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WORDS OF APPRECIATION



Being a student of Masters of public administration from Jamia Milia Islamia and having a deep interest in subject, initially current affairs Identification and Interlinking was not a challenge for me.

But later on, it became difficult for me to actively Identify and Interlink topics in limited TIME.

Coincidentally, when time management for optional current affairs become a bit difficult, You launched the PubAdPedia Magazine Initiative. I was already aware of your credibility in field of Public Administration because of Daily Answer Writing Initiative that I had joined in 2019. So it was an easy decision for me to try the PubAdpedia Magazines.

As I have already told you in my earlier feedbacks, the Flowcharts ("फूल पत्ते" diagrams, that i used to call them) where you interlink current affairs with static theory/thinkers was really helpful. This Rahul-Factor is the USP of your magazine, but I believe it is going to be the TSP for Aspirants (Time Saving PubAdpedia).

My best wishes to you and your initiatives for the aspirant community!

Mehak Jain

Rank 17, CSE 2021

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WORDS OF APPRECIATION



Recent trends of UPSC Public Administration optional paper clearly indicates that giving recent current linkages and examples can significantly boost one's marks in the optional.

But unfortunately there is lack of such regular Public Administration specific current affairs collection and quality presentation or linkages. Due to time and other constraints aspirants can't do a comprehensive study and brainstorming for this aspect.

But fortunately I have seen Your PubAdpedia magazines as a good effort in that direction. Your efforts can really aid serious aspirants' preparation in a positive manner and save much of the valuable time.

Your basics and understanding of the subject is quite profound and enriching. The flow chart based easy explanation and linking things with static syllabus like thinkers etc is a good approach of your magazine. This can be of good help for freshers as well as seniors alike.

Also I liked your noble intentions of providing the magazine access to poor deserving aspirants free of cost. This shows goodness of your heart and is in sync with my core belief of #Sharing is Caring !

I wish all my best wishes to you and the PubAdPedia magazine. I hope the magazine and your efforts get a rightful top place soon.

God Bless You!

Vijay Wardhan Sarswat

I.P.S. (CSE 2018)

I.A.S. (CSE 2020)

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WORDS OF APPRECIATION



Dear Rahul,

This is to extend my congratulations on the wonderful unique initiative, PubAdPedia Magazines. You are one of the most well known & reliable faces in the online world of CSE guidance. This is a feat in itself, given how cut throat the field is. Only genuinely good content and honest advices can attract aspirants today. You've proved your mettle there with your GS & Public Administration videos.

What stands out about PubAdPedia Magazines is that it fills the crucial gap of linking syllabus topics with current affairs. This not only gives one easy marks but also improves understand of topics for those not so 'straight' Pub Ad questions. Everyone who has prepared for this optional knows the importance of linkages & examples. This was a dire need left unfulfilled till now. When one prepares current topics from a GS point of view, it needs a lot of extra effort to segregate & link them with Public administration topics. Because of redundancy of effort and paucity of time (always a case with upsc aspirants), they end of skipping it. PubAdPedia does that for you.

Your magazine is the answer to the question why public administration seems easy but doesn't fetch marks!

I'm sure PubAdPedia will make the UPSC path easy for all aspirants with Public Administration optional.

Keep coming up with great content that helps aspirants across sections.

My best wishes.

An ardent follower of your content.

Prashasti

Rank 413, CSE 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

✚ Hirschman Model of Exit, Voice and Loyalty

#TH

The role of labour unions in emerging sectors

There have been many reports of lay-offs in the last few months, especially in emerging sectors. Lay-offs have been taking place not only in India, but in major economies like the U.S. too. Large, medium and small enterprises as well as start-ups have let go of dozens or even thousands of workers. In 2022, start-ups including Byju's, Ola, Unacademy, Vedantu, Chargebee, WhiteHat Jr, Udaan and CityMall announced lay-offs. Their reasons included restructuring, cost-cutting, automation, financial constraints, performance rating, adverse economic conditions and changes in the business model. At the global level, Alphabet, Amazon, Meta, Microsoft, Twitter and Apple, among others, have let go of employees. Amazon cited an uncertain economy and rapid hires in the past as reasons for retrenchment.

The Amazon story

At the same time, unionisation attempts in these giant companies have caught our imagination. Amazon workers at the warehouse at Staten Island called JFK8 succeeded in forming the Amazon Labour Union under the leadership of Chris Smalls, who had been fired from the company. Amazon reacted by filing numerous objections with the National Labour Relations Board, the federal body that protects the rights of private sector employees to join together. On the other hand, employees at the warehouse near Albany voted overwhelmingly against unionisation in October 2022 as many of them were sceptical of the bargaining power of a union vis-à-vis a giant like Amazon.

In India, Amazon shut down Amazon Food and Amazon Academy. It retrenched workers in the Indian facility in a gradual manner. The Nascent Information Technology Employees Senate, which works for the welfare, rights, justice and empowerment of IT (Information Technology),



K.R. Shyam Sundar

is Professor, XLRI, Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur

BPO (business process outsourcing) and KPO (knowledge process outsourcing) professionals in India, has alleged that Amazon violated labour laws. It also complained to the Union Labour Minister, seeking his Ministry's intervention. The Deputy Chief Labour Commissioner in Bengaluru served a notice seeking information from the company. But it is well-known how seriously employers, especially multi-national corporations (MNCs), take labour departments; they ignore conciliation meetings more often than trade unions. NITES President Harpreet Singh Saluja vows to fight Amazon, but this will not be easy.

The Hirschman model

The question we can then ask is whether collective action can be taken in emerging enterprises. Start-ups hardly have trade unions in their facilities and so retrenchments in these companies go uncontested.

Compared to conventional industries such as manufacturing, public utilities, and conventional financial sectors such as traditional banking and insurance, forming unions in modern and emerging sectors is much more difficult. Long ago, Freeman and Medoff examined the effect of trade unionism on the exit behaviour of workers in the context of the 'exit-voice-loyalty' model of Albert Hirschman. I use this with some modifications to explain my point.

On the demand side, the IT and IT-enabled Services employees felt no need for trade unions as unions are typically associated with manual labour, while IT employees are associated with "elitism" and "professionalism". It is believed that IT employees do not need trade unions as they have competitive compensation pay packages, supposedly good conditions of work and a mechanism to address grievances. And so, they stay on and are loyal to the company and the industry. If these conditions are violated,

they switch to other organisations as they have the required skill sets (exit); hence, labour turnover in this sector has been rather high. They do not collectively bargain or strike or resort to legal action as middle-class employees who go to court would be stigmatised (voice). And many survive by simply keeping quiet (loyalty).

Despite this, announcements of massive lay-offs, such as by Tata Consultancy Services in 2015, have led to the birth of labour unions in this sector in India. Bad human resource policies and practices, too, have provoked or prompted workers to unionise. But the rate of formation of unions and the union activities in this industry (on the supply side) do not instill confidence in the minds of employees.

A huge ask

Unions in the IT sector have to deal with both Indian and Western behemoths, which is a huge ask. The state obviously needs MNCs to stay on in India. Start-ups don't have the ideal conditions for unionisation. Employees would rather accept low-paying jobs than unionise. Further, trade unions are fighting on multiple fronts. They are struggling to retain historical labour rights, secure social security for the millions of informal workers and fight the adversities created during and after COVID-19. Industrial accidents, too, are frequent. Many garment and electronics industries, for instance, which have wide supply chains, violate labour rights. Unions have sometimes succeeded in securing marginal rights. But there is only so much that they can do. The Amazon story is going viral in the 500 million labour market in India where hardly 10% of the total workforce is unionised.

However, this is not to brush aside the fact that unions need to be encompassing of all workers and be the vanguard of workers' mobilisation. After all, they are the only historically tested collective labour institutions.

The rate of formation of unions and the union activities in this industry do not instill confidence in the minds of employees

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<p>Model</p>	<p>The Hirschman Model of Exit, Voice, and Loyalty is a framework introduced by economist Albert Hirschman in his 1970 book "Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States". The model describes three types of response by individuals or groups to declining performance or dissatisfaction with a service or product:</p> <p>Exit: This is when individuals or groups choose to leave the service or product, often in favor of a competitor.</p> <p>Voice: This is when individuals or groups choose to raise their concerns and try to bring about change from within the system, such as complaining to the service provider or participating in reforms.</p> <p>Loyalty: This is when individuals or groups choose to continue to support the service or product despite their dissatisfaction, often out of a sense of obligation, duty, or attachment.</p>
<p>Analysis for Public</p>	<p>In the context of public</p>

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Administration

administration, the Hirschman Model can be applied to the choices that citizens make regarding their involvement with government institutions and services.

For example, a citizen may choose to exit by opting for private services instead of public ones, voice their concerns to elected officials, or remain loyal to the government despite its shortcomings.

The model highlights the importance of both exit and voice mechanisms in ensuring accountability and responsiveness of government institutions, as well as the role of loyalty in maintaining stability and continuity. The public choice approach in public administration, which emphasizes the importance of individual self-interest in shaping government policies and outcomes, is closely related to the Hirschman Model as it also considers the choices made by citizens and other stakeholders.

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2. ADMINISTRATIVE THINKERS

✚ Judicial Majoritarianism and Judicial Hunches in Decision Making #TheHindu

Is judicial majoritarianism justified?

Why is it that the judges have to resort to head counting in order to resolve disagreements amongst them? In case of an erroneous majority decision, is there a need to highlight a meritorious minority decision?

EXPLAINER

G.S. Bajpai
Ankit Kaushik

The story so far

As the recent majority judgment of the Supreme Court on demonetisation comes under criticism, the minority judgment by J. Nagarathna is being hailed for its challenge to the RBI's institutional acquiescence to the Central government. This questions our blind acceptance of numerical majorities in judicial decision-making.

What is judicial majoritarianism?

As opposed to standard matters heard by Division Benches consisting of two judges, numerical majorities are of particular importance to cases which involve a substantial interpretation of constitutional provisions. In such cases, Constitutional Benches, consisting of five or more judges, are set up in consonance with Article 145 (3) of the Constitution. Such Benches usually consist of five, seven, nine, 11 or even 13 judges. This is done to facilitate decision-making by ensuring numerical majorities in judicial outcomes.

The requirement for a majority consensus flows from Article 145(5) of the Constitution which states that no judgment in such cases can be delivered except with the concurrence of a majority of the judges but that judges are free to deliver dissenting judgments or opinions.

What is at the heart of the debate?

As opposed to representatives of the people in legislatures who may act on hunches or popular perception, judges are experts of law and are aware of the arguments for and against the impugned matter. Given the same, Jeremy Waldron questions why is it that the judges too have to resort to head counting in order to resolve disagreements amongst judges.

All judges on a particular Bench give their rulings on the same set of arguments and written submissions. In light of the



Tightrope walk: Numerical majorities are important in cases which involve the interpretation of constitutional provisions. ISTOCKPHOTO

same, any differences in judicial decisions can be attributed to a difference in either the methodology adopted and the logic applied by the judges, or, as proffered by the legal realists such as Jerome Frank, upon their own 'judicial hunches' which may be an outcome of their subjective experiences, outlook, and biases. In such circumstances, it is entirely possible that the majority may fall into either methodological fallacies and errors or be limited by their 'judicial hunch' respectively.

In such situations, a meritorious minority decision, irrespective of the Impeccability of its reasoning receives little weightage in terms of its outcomes. Our Constitutional history is replete with such meritorious dissents. The dissenting opinion of Justice H.R. Khanna in A.D.M. Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976) upholding the right to life and personal liberty even during situations of constitutional excep-

tionalism is a prime example. Another example is the dissenting opinion of Justice Subba Rao in the Kharak Singh v. State of U.P. (1962) case upholding the right to privacy which received the judicial stamp of approval in the K.S. Puttaswamy v. UOI (2017) case.

Moreover, the rate of dissent itself is subject to influences. To exemplify, Yogesh Pratap Singh, Afroz Alam, and, Akash Chandra Jauhari (2016) found that the rate of judicial dissent at the height of the Emergency in 1976 was a mere 1.27% as opposed to 10.52% in 1980. The study also found that the rate of dissent where the Chief Justice was a part of the Bench was lower than in those cases where the Chief Justice was not on the Bench. Such situations call into question the efficiency and desirability of head-counting procedures for a judicial determination on questions of national and constitutional importance.

What is the gap in our understanding?

Ronald Dworkin proffers a system which may either give more weightage to the vote of senior judges given that they have more experience or to the junior judges as they may represent popular opinion better. Such alternatives, however, can only be explored once we identify and question the rationales which underlie head-counting in judicial decision-making.

The absence of a critical discourse on judicial majoritarianism represents one of the most fundamental gaps in our knowledge regarding the functioning of our Supreme Court. As pending Constitutional Bench matters are listed for hearing, we must reflect upon the arguments of judicial majoritarianism on the basis of which these cases are to be decided.

G.S. Bajpai is Vice-Chancellor, Rajiv Gandhi National University of Law, Punjab where Ankit Kaushik is an Asst. Professor.

THE GIST

Unlike elected leaders of legislatures who may act on hunches or popular perception, judges are experts of law and are aware of the arguments for and against an impugned matter.

The rulings of judges can be coloured by their subjective experiences, perceptions, prejudices and biases. Consequently, judges and their judgments can fall prey to 'judicial hunches'.

In such a situation, a meritorious minority decision, irrespective of the impeccability of its reasoning, receives little weightage in terms of its outcomes. Our Constitutional history is replete with such meritorious dissents.

Context

As the recent majority judgment of the Supreme Court on demonetisation comes under criticism, the minority judgment by J. Nagarathna is being hailed for its challenge to the RBI's institutional acquiescence to the Central government. This questions our blind acceptance of numerical majorities in

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What is at the heart of the debate?	As opposed to representatives of the people in legislatures who may act on hunches or popular perception, judges are experts of law and are aware of the arguments for and against the impugned matter. Given the same, Jeremy

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	<p>Waldron questions why is it that the judges too have to resort to head counting in order to resolve disagreements amongst judges.</p> <p>All judges on a particular Bench give their rulings on the same set of arguments and written submissions. In light of the same, any differences in judicial decisions can be attributed to a difference in either the methodology adopted and the logic applied by the judges, or, as proffered by the legal realists such as Jerome Frank, upon their own 'judicial hunches' which may be an outcome of their subjective experiences, outlook, and biases. In such circumstances, it is entirely possible that the majority may fall into either methodological fallacies and errors or be limited by their 'judicial hunch' respectively.</p>
<p>History</p>	<p>Our Constitutional history is replete with such meritorious dissents. The dissenting opinion of Justice H.R. Khanna in A.D.M. Jabalpur v. Shivkant Shukla (1976) upholding the right to life and personal liberty even during situations of constitutional exceptionalism is a prime</p>

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	<p>example. Another example is the dissenting opinion of Justice Subba Rao in the Kharak Singh v. State of U.P. (1962) case upholding the right to privacy which received the judicial stamp of approval in the K.S. Puttaswamy v. UOI (2017) case.</p> <p>Moreover, the rate of dissent itself is subject to influences. To exemplify, Yogesh Pratap Singh, Afroz Alam, and, Akash Chandra Jauhari (2016) found that the rate of judicial dissent at the height of the Emergency in 1976 was a mere 1.27% as opposed to 10.52% in 1980. The study also found that the rate of dissent where the Chief Justice was a part of the Bench was lower than in those cases where the Chief Justice was not on the Bench. Such situations call into question the efficiency and desirability of head-counting procedures for a judicial determination on questions of national and constitutional importance.</p>
<p>What is the gap in our understanding?</p>	<p>Ronald Dworkin proffers a system which may either give more weightage to the vote of senior judges given that they have more experience or to the junior judges as they may represent popular opinion better. Such alternatives,</p>

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	<p>however, can only be explored once we identify and question the rationales which underlie head-counting in judicial decision-making. The absence of a critical discourse on judicial majoritarianism represents one of the most fundamental gaps in our knowledge regarding the functioning of our Supreme Court. As pending Constitutional Bench matters are listed for hearing, we must reflect upon the arguments of judicial majoritarianism on the basis of which these cases are to be decided.</p>
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#PubAdPedia Analysis

<p>Merits of using majoritarianism in decision making</p>	<p>1.Efficiency: Majoritarianism can lead to quicker decision-making as it avoids prolonged discussions and debates. In situations where time is of the essence, majoritarianism can be an effective approach.</p> <p>2.Representativeness: Majoritarianism can be a way of ensuring that decisions are made by the majority and, therefore, represent the views and interests of the largest number of people.</p> <p>3.Simplicity: Majoritarianism is a straightforward approach to decision-making. It requires a simple vote or tally to determine the majority opinion. This simplicity can make it an</p>
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	<p>attractive option for groups who want to avoid complex decision-making processes.</p> <p>4.Accountability: Majoritarianism can increase accountability as the majority is responsible for the outcome of the decision. This can be helpful in situations where there is a need to assign responsibility and ensure that actions are taken.</p> <p>5.Stability: Majoritarianism can lead to stable decision-making as it provides a clear mandate for action. This stability can be important in situations where uncertainty or instability is a concern</p>
<p>Demerits of using majoritarianism in decision making</p>	<p>1.Tyranny of the majority: The biggest criticism of majoritarianism is that it can lead to the tyranny of the majority, where the majority group makes decisions that are detrimental to the interests of minority groups. This can lead to feelings of marginalization and disenfranchisement among minority groups.</p> <p>2.Lack of consensus: Majoritarian decision-making can lead to a lack of consensus among stakeholders. If decisions are made solely based on the will of the majority, then the minority groups may feel alienated and unrepresented, and the decision may not be fully accepted or implemented.</p>

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	<p>3.Polarization: Majoritarianism can lead to polarization and a lack of compromise. When decisions are made purely based on the will of the majority, there may be a tendency to ignore the needs and concerns of minority groups, which can exacerbate existing social and political divisions.</p> <p>4.Overlooks individual rights: In majoritarianism, individual rights can be overlooked in favor of the will of the majority. This can lead to violations of civil liberties and human rights.</p> <p>5.Limited creativity: Majoritarianism can limit creativity and innovation because decisions are made based on what is popular or conventional. This can stifle new ideas and perspectives that may be valuable to the decision-making process.</p>
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PYQ 2015

- As March and Simon point out, there seems to exist a ‘Gresham’s Law’ of decision-making.” Explain.

✚ **Khula Certificate and Riggs Prismatic Society**

#TH

Note- Riggs is important theme for UPSC.

Only Family Courts can issue *Khula* certificates to Muslim women: HC

The Hindu Bureau
CHENNAI

Muslim women can approach only Family Courts and not self-declared private bodies such as a Shariat Council consisting of a few members of a Jamaath, in order to seek *Khula* (divorce), the Madras High Court has held. It has ruled that *Khula* certificates issued by private bodies are

invalid in law.

Justice C. Saravanan ordered this, while quashing a *Khula* certificate issued by the Shariat Council of Tamil Nadu Towheed Jamaath at Mannady in Chennai. The judge directed the estranged couple to approach either the Tamil Nadu Legal Services Authority or a Family Court to resolve their disputes.

The direction was is-

sued while allowing a 2019 writ petition filed by a man to quash the *Khula* certificate obtained by his wife from the Shariat Council in 2017. He contended that the council, registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act of 1975, had no authority to issue such certificates.

The petitioner also told the court that he had filed a petition for restitution of

conjugal rights in 2017 and obtained an *ex-parte* decree too. Since the couple had a baby boy in 2015 after their marriage in 2013, he had filed a petition under the Guardians and Wards Act of 1890 too, and obtained favourable orders.

At present, a petition for executing the decree was pending before an Additional Family Court.

<p>Meaning of <i>Khula</i></p>	<p>Khula is a practice of Muslim personal law that allows a Muslim woman to seek a divorce from her husband by returning the dower or gift received from him at the time of marriage. The concept of khula can be related to Riggs' theory of prismatic society.</p>
<p>Riggs' theory of prismatic society</p>	<p>Riggs' theory of prismatic society states that modern societies are characterized by a multiplicity of social and cultural groups that coexist with each other in the same space. These groups have their own cultural norms and values, and they often clash with each other. This creates a situation of social complexity and conflict.</p>

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In the case of khula, the practice allows Muslim women to seek a divorce from their husbands, which goes against the traditional patriarchal norms of Muslim society. This creates a conflict between the traditional norms and the modern legal norms that allow women to seek a divorce.

The prismatic nature of society is reflected in the way that the practice of khula is perceived by different groups in society. Traditionalists may view khula as a threat to the traditional norms of Muslim society, while modernists may see it as a necessary step towards gender equality.

Overall, the practice of khula can be seen as an example of how traditional norms and modern legal norms can come into conflict in a prismatic society. It also highlights the importance of recognizing the diverse cultural and social groups in society and finding ways to accommodate their needs and values.

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3. ORGANISATION

✚ Co-Regulation #TheHindu

Note- UPSC used to ask creative questions under “Regulation”. So here we goes!

Towards transparency in OTT regulation

It has been two years since the government issued the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines and Digital Media Ethics Code) Rules through which the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B) was given the task of regulating content on OTT and online platforms. India's approach can be termed as a light-touch 'co-regulation' model where there is 'self-regulation' at the industry level and final 'oversight mechanism' at the Ministry level. The Rules provide for a grievance redressal mechanism and a code of ethics. They mandate access control mechanisms, including parental locks, for content classified as U/A 13+ or higher and a reliable age verification mechanism for programmes classified as 'A' (18+).

A survey of OTT regulation in different countries suggests that most of them are yet to come up with a clear statute-backed framework. Few of them such as Singapore and Australia stand out. In Singapore, the Infocomm Media Development Authority is the common regulator for different media. Aside from instituting a statutory framework and promoting industry self-regulation, its approach to media regulation emphasises on promoting media literacy through public education.

Towards media literacy

Though the OTT Rules were notified in 2021, there is little awareness about them among the general public. The Rules mandate the display of contact details relating to grievance redressal mechanisms and grievance officers on OTT websites/interface. However, compliance is very low. In many cases, either the complaint redressal information is not published or published in a manner that makes it difficult for a user to notice easily. In some cases, the details are not included as part of the OTT app interface. This underlines the need for ensuring uniformity in the way



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Consumer awareness and transparency in grievance redressal will further strengthen India's OTT regime

OTT publishers display key information relating to their obligations, timelines for complaint redressal, contact details of grievance officers, etc. The manner, text, language and frequency for display of vital information could be enshrined in the Rules. The OTT industry associations could be mandated to run periodic campaigns in print and electronic media about the grievance redressal mechanism.

The interpretation of age rating (UA 13+, for example) and the content descriptors ('violence', for instance) could be in the respective languages of the video (apart from English). Such provisions are embedded in law for display of anti-tobacco messages in films. Further, age ratings and content descriptors could be shown prominently in full-screen mode for a mandatory minimum duration instead of a few seconds on screen. Such a rule exists for films under the Cinematograph Act. The Rules could also provide for clear guidelines to ensure that a film's classification/rating is prominent and legible in advertisements and promos of OTT content in print and electronic media.

Need for transparency

A periodic audit of the actual existence and efficacy of access controls and age verification mechanisms and the display of grievance redressal details by each OTT platform may be undertaken by an independent body. While the Rules require disclosure of grievance details by publishers and self-regulating bodies, the reporting formats only capture the number of complaints received and decided. Instead, the full description of complaints received by OTT providers and self-regulatory bodies and decisions given thereon may be published in the public domain.

The Ministry could consider facilitating a dedicated umbrella website wherein the details of applicable Rules, content codes, advisories, contact details for

complaints/appeals, etc. are published. OTT providers and appellate/self-regulatory bodies can be made to upload the details of grievances and redressal decisions, which will be visible for the public and government authorities. This approach will aid in enhancing transparency.

The current Rules provide for the third/final tier as the Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) comprising officer-nominees from various ministries of Central government, and domain experts. The mechanism is such that while IDC recommends the course of action on OTT content violations, the Secretary of the Ministry is competent to take the final decision. The Supreme Court and High Courts have underlined the need for establishing a statutory body for regulating broadcast content. Pending the constitution of such a statutory regulator for the media, the IDC's membership may be made more broad-based and representative and with security of tenure.

There is no provision for the disclosure or publication of an apology/warning/censure on the platform or website. This may be incorporated in the Rules. Financial penalties on erring entities may also be provided. In the present era of media convergence, it is high time we evolve a common set of guidelines for content, classification, age ratings, violations, etc. so that content across platforms is governed uniformly.

India's OTT regulatory model seeks to be an efficacious combination of self-regulation and legal backing. This is in line with the global trend. The I&B Ministry envisaged that India's OTT regulations "would raise India's stature at an international level and serve as a model for other nations to emulate." The above initiatives towards enhancing media literacy and transparency will help in furthering this objective, realise the efficacy of 'self-regulation' and empower millions of OTT consumers.

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Why in News?	Refer above!
	<p>The new OTT regulations in India introduced in 2021 require OTT platforms to have a grievance redressal mechanism, which includes the appointment of a grievance redressal officer, a self-regulatory body headed by a retired judge or an eminent person, and an oversight mechanism by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The self-regulatory body will be responsible for classifying content and addressing complaints.</p>
What is Co- Regulation?	<p>Co-regulation is a regulatory approach in which the government collaborates with the industry to regulate a particular sector. In the case of new OTT regulations in India, co-regulation refer to the partnership between the government and the industry to regulate the content on OTT (Over-The-Top) platforms.</p>
How Co- Regulation is different from Self-regulation?	<p>Co-regulation is different from self-regulation in that it involves a partnership between the government and the industry. While self-regulation is an approach in which the industry regulates itself, co-regulation involves government oversight and collaboration with industry stakeholders.</p> <p>Under co-regulation, the industry is responsible for developing and implementing standards and regulations, while the government provides oversight and support. The</p>

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	<p>partnership allows for more effective regulation as the industry has the expertise to develop standards that are practical and effective, while the government provides the necessary oversight to ensure compliance with standards and regulations.</p> <p>Overall, co-regulation provides a collaborative and proactive approach to regulating the content on OTT platforms, ensuring that the industry operates within a legal and ethical framework while protecting the rights of viewers.</p>
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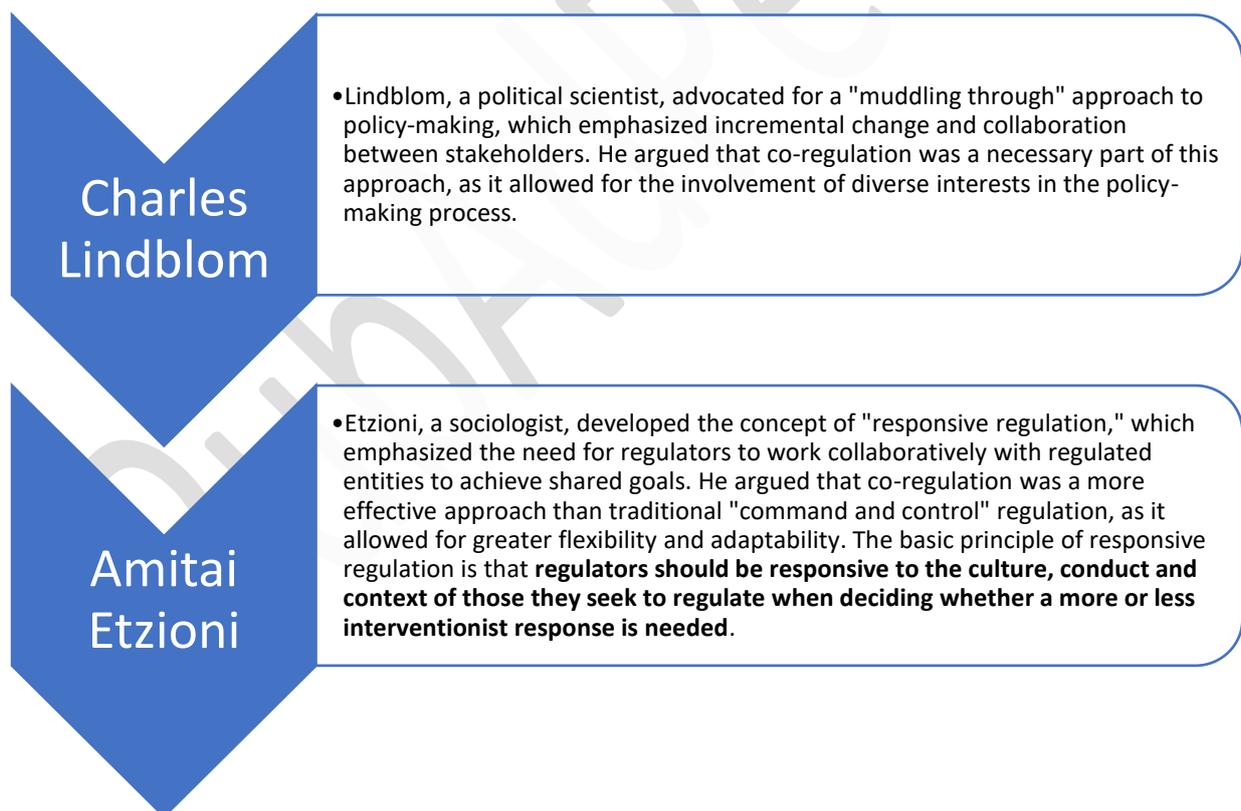


Fig. Co-Regulation and Thinkers <R-Factor>

4. ACCOUNTABILITY & CONTROL

✚ Role of Foreign Media in ensuring accountability

#TheHindu

A double-edged bludgeon



VIVEK KATJU

Government's hard-nosed response to foreign media's criticism may be working. But it is not a reliable strategy

ACCORDING TO A press release from his office, Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar "interacted" with a group of Indian Information Service probationers on February 15. While asking them to be "real protectors of democracy and nationalism" he described the "dumping of information" as "another way of invasion" and "he called for bold and effective steps to neutralise it". The Vice President further "underlined the need to remain alert to counter the doctored narratives to run down India's growth story".

The Vice President's formulations indicate that, for him, "dumping of information" implies "doctored narratives"; that just as "dumping of goods" damages a country's industry the "dumping of information" through which "doctored narratives" are spread is designed to damage a country, including its economy. And, since "dumping of information" is an "invasion" it needs to be robustly and immediately countered. The remarks came a day after the survey began of the BBC offices in Delhi and Mumbai to ascertain if the organisation had infringed provisions of India's tax laws. It would not be completely illogical to infer that perhaps he was indirectly referring — and approving — the need for strong action to counter BBC's "doctored narratives".

It can be no one's case that any organisation — Indian or foreign — should be allowed to break Indian laws, including those relating to taxation. Any action necessary to ensure adherence to Indian laws should be taken. However, in the BBC matter, the perception that the action was a consequence of its documentaries *India: The Modi Question* is and will continue to remain strong despite the Indian revenue authorities officially stating the survey had led to indications that tax had not been paid "on certain remittances" and "several discrepancies and inconsistencies with Transfer Pricing documentation" had also emerged. There is little doubt that if, as is now possible, the tax authorities take further action and impose penalties and taxes the matter will reach the courts.

While the opposition parties saw the BBC survey operation as an attempt to muzzle the

The Modi government has upped the ante with the BBC in particular and the foreign media in general on anti-India and especially anti-Modi reporting. The tax authorities surveys and the official statement at their conclusion demonstrate that. It is interesting that no Western government, not even the British, was critical of the survey. That will fortify the Modi government's belief that so long as the Indian market can confer advantages to Western commerce and industry, the West's liberal media's criticism of its policies and actions need not be taken seriously.

press, the BJP, on its part, called the British news organisation "corrupt" and "rubbish". It also accused it of indulging in "anti-India propaganda". This is similar to the attitude that the Vice President has advised to aggressively counter the "dumping of information" and "doctored narratives". Of course "doctored narratives" have and should be countered. The question is what is the best way to do so. Strong language may warm the cockles of nationalist hearts but does it count with international opinion? Oftentimes the rapier point of a logical argument backed by evidence is far more effective than a bludgeon.

Obviously, in the BBC's case, a not-so-subtle bludgeon has been used. Perhaps that has been so to inform the foreign media that they have to respect the same redlines as the Indian media. What is significant is that on February 14, the day the survey began, Air India — now completely owned by the Tata conglomerate — announced its decision to buy Boeing and Airbus aircraft for its fleet. That day, as the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced in a media release, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and President Joe Biden had a "warm and productive" phone call during which the two leaders also "welcomed the announcement of a landmark agreement between Air India and Boeing as a shining example of mutually beneficial cooperation...". On the same day, the MEA also announced Modi had a "video call" with French President Emmanuel Macron and the Tata and Airbus companies leaderships "on the occasion of the launch of a partnership between Air India and Airbus".

Now, while Airbus aircraft are equipped with British Rolls-Royce engines, the fact that Modi decided to engage with the US and French presidents on what is essentially a commercial deal between companies was an unmistakable message to the British government and industry to rein in its media organisations so that they do not cross India's current redlines. Of course, political leaders encourage bilateral and multilateral commercial activities between their companies, invite investments and sometimes their governments iron out difficulties which may be com-

ing in the way of specific business arrangements. However, seldom do they engage themselves so directly as Biden, Macron and Modi did on February 14. For the former two, Air India's decisions would result in direct manufacturing jobs but in Modi's case that would not be so — though the growth in aviation would lead to economic growth.

The Modi government has upped the ante with the BBC in particular and the foreign media in general on anti-India and especially anti-Modi reporting. The tax authorities surveys and the official statement at their conclusion demonstrate that. It is interesting that no Western government, not even the British, was critical of the survey. That will fortify the Modi government's belief that so long as the Indian market can confer advantages to Western commerce and industry, the West's liberal media's criticism of its policies and actions need not be taken seriously. And, with the US, in particular, considering India as an important partner to counter China, a significant security component has been added to the allure of the Indian market.

There is little doubt that Western liberal opinion will continue to remain critical of the Modi government's policies, especially on its perceptions of violation of minority rights. It strongly appears that the government has decided that it will completely disregard Western liberal opinion and media because it is convinced that they cannot harm India's growing ties with the Western world. However, the tax survey against the BBC indicates that that disregard will turn to punitive action not only against the erring media organisation but against that country's business when redlines are crossed.

This approach may work but its efficacy is always uncertain. This is because both media and business lobbies can sometimes put unbearable pressures on Western governments not to allow India to get away with its carrot-and-stick policies. Thus, the Vice President's advice and the government's approaches have to be leavened with prudence.

The writer is a former diplomat

Positive Role of Foreign Media

1. **Independent reporting:** Foreign media organizations often have the resources and freedom to report on issues that may not

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be covered by local media outlets due to government censorship or other restrictions. By providing independent reporting and analysis, foreign media can help to uncover corruption and other forms of wrongdoing, and hold governments and institutions accountable for their actions.

2. **Global perspective:** Foreign media can provide a global perspective on local issues, which can help to place them in a broader context and highlight their significance in the international community. This can put pressure on governments and institutions to address issues that may have been overlooked or ignored by local media or authorities.
3. **Exposure of human rights abuses:** Foreign media can expose human rights abuses and other forms of injustice that may be taking place in a country. This can help to bring attention to these issues and put pressure on governments and institutions to take action to address them.
4. **Protection of journalists:** Foreign media organizations can provide protection and support to local journalists who may face harassment, intimidation, or violence for their reporting. This can help to ensure that journalists are able to continue

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	<p>their important work of holding those in power accountable.</p>
<p>Negative role of Foreign Media</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Cultural insensitivity: Foreign media may lack an understanding of local customs, values, and beliefs, and may inadvertently offend or misrepresent local communities in their reporting. This can lead to mistrust and a breakdown in communication between foreign media and local populations. 2. Biased reporting: Foreign media may bring their own biases and perspectives to their reporting, which can lead to a distortion of the facts or a misrepresentation of local issues. This can contribute to misunderstandings and can undermine the credibility of foreign media outlets. 3. Neocolonialism: Some critics argue that the presence of foreign media can reinforce neocolonial power dynamics, in which foreign actors maintain a dominant role in shaping narratives and influencing local politics. This can be perceived as a threat to national sovereignty and can undermine local efforts to address accountability and governance issues. 4. Security concerns: The presence of foreign media can also raise security concerns, as

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local authorities may view their reporting as a threat to national security or stability. This can lead to harassment, intimidation, or even violence against foreign journalists, as well as local journalists who are associated with them.

Charge-Sheet Scrutiny

#TheHindu

Note- Refer to previous editions for linking RTI with theory and thinkers!!

Charge sheet scrutiny is not a case of prying eyes

The highest court of India reached the almost last frontier of transparency in its agreeing to the live telecast of some of its hearings – a move warmly welcomed by activists clamouring for more openness in judicial proceedings. The Chief Justice of India's statement, that Supreme Court of India judgments will now be translated in four languages (Hindi, Gujarati, Odia and Tamil, as "the English language in its 'legal avatar' is not comprehensible to 99.9% of the citizens") is another step towards making judicial processes more accessible.

Against this backdrop, a Supreme Court pronouncement on charge sheets appears to be retrograde. Here, the Court ruled that a charge sheet filed against an accused in a criminal case is not a 'public document' within the meaning of the Right to Information Act 2005 or the Indian Evidence Act – therefore, the demand that a charge sheet in a criminal case should be uploaded on to a public website as soon as it is filed in court was untenable. The order was passed while disposing of a petition filed by a public interest litigant activist and journalist.

It is a step that may be viewed as a setback for those pushing for greater transparency in the criminal justice administration as this has several implications as far as investigating officials and victims of crime are concerned.

Contradicting an earlier order

On the face of it, the judgment seems to contradict an order passed by the Court where, in *Youth Bar Association of India vs Union of India* (2016), it directed that the First Information Report (FIR) in any case should be on the relevant investigating agency's website within 24 hours of its registration. This was for public perusal and



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The top court's order against public scrutiny of a charge sheet before a trial begins is a setback to judicial reform and will only hamper the quality of an investigation

appropriate action. But in the Court's view now, the charge sheet (i.e., the Final Report specified by the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973) is on a footing different from the FIR, and hence cannot be shared with anyone other than the accused and the victim. This was presumably because a charge sheet was a comprehensive account of the crime in question and had vital information such as a list of prosecution witnesses and documents in support of the investigating officer's conclusions.

Though such material would become public knowledge during the trial, in the top court's view, any action to part with details contained in these documents even before a trial begins would be detrimental to the accused and the victim. The Court has observed that open publicity to what is contained in the final report is not within the scheme contemplated by the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Times have changed

We are now a long way from the early days of the Constitution, when confidentiality was the mantra in every aspect of judicial activity. Courts then were a sacrosanct institution, where none of their actions was open to criticism or any kind of scrutiny. The slightest criticism of judicial decisions stood a fair chance of inviting contempt and punishment. We now have a situation where judges are often criticised in the media for their judicial decisions that are unconventional and not in line with popular expectations. We have even seen a judge's personal life being subjected to public debate. It is against this backdrop that the Supreme Court's decision to keep charge sheets away from public knowledge could be disapproved by those who are constantly pushing to expand the frontiers of judicial reticence.

In my view, sharing a charge sheet with the public on demand is very much in order. While it need not necessarily be posted on the website of the court concerned, public interest dictates a positive response to a request to peruse its contents. It is true that vested interests in league with the accused might engage in finding loopholes in the charge sheet with a view to undermining the prosecution case. But this is no reason to prevent members of the public from wanting to have a look at the charge sheet before commencement of the trial and be denied an opportunity to evaluate the quality of an investigation. Instead, the prospect of critical analysis by a rank outsider has the potential to enhance the soundness of an investigation and prevent tendentious prosecution against innocent individuals not based on facts. We now know how some investigations are malicious and prejudiced due to extraneous considerations. A trial court will actually benefit from outsider scrutiny of the prosecution case if a charge sheet is made available to the lay public.

A lost chance

The Supreme Court's order is a wake-up call to all investigating agencies, including the Central Bureau of Investigation, which have often been assailed by courts for delays in filing a charge sheet or for the poor quality of investigation. Court scrutiny is a good feature in India's criminal justice system that reasonably ensures that false prosecution of an innocent individual is only an aberration and not a rule. A chance for well-meaning members of the public to study a charge sheet, at least in important cases before a trial begins, will only ensure that prospects of loosely framed charge sheets will be fewer in number.

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<p>Context</p>	<p>The Supreme Court has ruled that a charge sheet filed against an accused in a criminal case is not a 'public document' under the ambit of the Right to Information Act 2005 or the Indian Evidence Act.</p>
<p>Arguments "in favour" - Why such decision?</p>	<p>In the Court's view, the charge sheet is different from the FIR. It cannot be shared with anyone other than the accused and the victim. A charge sheet is a comprehensive account of the crime in question.</p> <p>It has vital information such as a list of prosecution witnesses and documents in support of the investigating officer's conclusions.</p> <p>The details contained in these documents even before a trial begins would be detrimental to the accused and the victim.</p>
<p>Arguments "against" - Why sharing a charge sheet with the public on demand is very much in order?</p>	<p>Earlier Judgement = Youth Bar Association of India vs Union of India (2016) - It directed that the First Information Report (FIR) should be on the relevant investigating agency's website within 24 hours of its registration for public perusal and appropriate action.</p> <p>➤ FIR vs chargesheet - But now the SC differentiated the chargesheet from the FIR</p>

stating that the latter had vital information such as a list of prosecution witnesses.

The prospect of critical analysis by a rank outsider has the **potential to enhance the soundness of an investigation** and prevent tendentious prosecution against innocent individuals not based on facts.

It is well known that some investigations are **malicious and prejudiced due to extraneous considerations**.

A trial court will actually **benefit from outsider scrutiny** of the prosecution case if a charge sheet is made available to the lay public.

It is a wake-up call to all investigating agencies, including the Central Bureau of Investigation, which have often been assailed by courts for delays in filing a charge sheet or for the poor quality of investigation.

Court scrutiny is a good feature in India's criminal justice system that reasonably ensures that **false prosecution** of an innocent individual is only an aberration and not a rule.

A chance for well-meaning members of the public to study a charge sheet, at least in important cases before a trial begins, will only ensure that **prospects of loosely framed charge sheets will be fewer in number**.

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5. DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION

✚ Fall of Vikasvaad – Centralization

#TheIE

Note the highlighted initiatives !!

The fall of vikasvaad

Moves to revamp bureaucracy, make it sensitive to local problems have been overtaken by familiar centralisation



MILIND SOHONI

ONE MORE BUDGET has come and gone. Yet the question remains: What is the change that will improve the lives of our ordinary people? Going by the pronouncements of our leaders, *adhyama* and *parampara* will rejuvenate our rivers, enhance democracy and improve the status of women. Through Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, the G20 nations too will learn about our recipe for holistic growth. Forgotten, however, is the ethos of vikasvaad of 2015.

Within the G20, we are close to the bottom of the pile. At \$1,900 our per capita GDP is the lowest. The next lowest is Indonesia at \$3,900. At 69 years, our life expectancy is the second lowest. More than 30 per cent of our jobs need just primary education and 70 per cent of those in the workforce have no contract – both a G20 record. Barely 35 per cent of our male population and 18 per cent of our female population attain secondary education – another G20 record. And, we have some of the most polluted rivers and cities.

An important reason that more girls do not go to college is that they must fetch water and firewood. Besides this, as is happening in Maharashtra, the public bus system, the mainstay of the girl student, is unravelling. Most cities remain unsafe for working women. These problems have to be handled by better science and effective administration. There is little that *parampara* or *adhyama* can do to help.

This leads us to ask: Whatever happened to vikasvaad? The vikasvaad of 2015 was aimed at a reform of the top bureaucracy of the country, and a revamp of the central scientific agencies. Ultimately, for any society, it is this cadre that determines the quality of people's lives. In India, through the IAS, IITs, IIMs and a network of central agencies, this power is concentrated in a few hundred top functionaries – the secretaries, directors of central institutions and senior scientists. They are responsible for the conduct of most state functions such as managing irrigation systems, making railway engines, running universities or regulating hospitals. The scientists and professors are responsible for the measurement, analysis and upgradation of most practices – from estimating groundwater to tackling pollution. The elite institutions, through their graduates, are to create new professionals, companies and agencies that would bring modern services to the citizens of this country.

By the 1990s, the folly of this exceptional concentration of knowledge and power was clear. A highly centralised scientific system merely ensured that the scientists were more accountable to their own internal bureaucracy of promotions and awards than to the problems which people in the regions faced. Even today, most IITs remain disconnected from the states they belong to and most professors have little understanding of regional problems – floods and droughts, pollution and its causes, small industries or failing public transport. The IIT graduate is a global brand with little training or interest in nation-building or the temperament for working on hard scientific problems.

The sheer complexity of managing a typical department of a state such as Maharashtra – let alone India – is immense. Managing transport, for example, requires a cadre of committed officers at all levels. The social value accounting of the public bus system, its logistics and current practices need careful documentation and analysis. They need to change with the times. The IAS cadre – their training and work culture – puts paid to such a systematic approach. The overlordship of the IAS over the state cadre and absence of collaboration with higher education institutions does not permit any delegation and consultation within the senior management.

The results are for all to see – most departments in several states, including Maharashtra, now fail to deliver even the most rudimentary services in a timely manner. This has created a rentier system of local politicians and contractors – from the informal wiremen and land surveyors to private buses and tanker lobbies – who now provide the missing service.

It was this system that was to be dismantled through the vikasvaad of 2015. Indeed, the directors of the IITs were hauled up before the President of India and told a few things about the utility of science. The IAS officers were told to go back to the place of their first posting and see for themselves what had changed and what had not. Lateral entry was mooted. But the process stopped abruptly, and here we are now, firmly in the throes of *parampara* and *adhyama*. Why has this happened?

The first reason is that dismantling the elite knowledge and power structure would cause a rebalance that would diminish the power of Delhi. It would lead to a decentralisation of the agenda of development and the re-emergence of India as a Union of states – the original intent of our Constitution makers. And this would strengthen a diverse civil society, enhance awareness and free thinking on issues of education, health and culture. That is anathema to some national parties.

But more importantly such a rebalancing would also lead to a multi-polar common market, as in Europe. The regional economy of the southern states, their knowledge cities, expanding cultural influence, intellectual ties across the world, and a significantly better system of citizenship and governance already offer an alternative developmental ecosystem. That would pose a serious challenge to the primacy of a single metropolitan “national” economy and its class structure and a “national” discourse operated from the North.

What we are now witnessing may well be a repeat of the historical expansion of the rule of Delhi, financed by merchants of the North, for economic control of the Deccan and the lands south of the Narmada. The appeal to the *parampara* of an old *rashtra* and the unity of Kashi-Rameswaram is the window dressing of a bitter campaign to enforce a single market and create a highly centralised, unequal and unjust, but unipolar India.

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6. FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION

✚ Goldilocks on Fiscal Deficit

#TheHindu

Note- Goldilock is middle path. Use it everywhere from GS1 to GS4 to PubAd to Life!

We've tried a Goldilocks on fiscal deficit

Given the macro-economic cycle, where global growth is likely to be in the coming year, we felt growth is the biggest consolidation; good growth is actually the best way to consolidate rather than consolidate through expenditure and stifle growth; if the GDP is buoyant, it would be easier to do

INTERVIEW

**T.V.
Somanathan**

Vikas Dhoot

The new income tax regime will surely benefit low-paid salaried workers who end up paying higher taxes under the old exemption-based system; the current account deficit will be manageable in 2023-24, and the fiscal consolidation glide path is steep but not impossible, Finance Secretary T.V. Somanathan said in an interview. Excerpts:

On fiscal consolidation, with a deficit target of 5.9% in 2023-24 and less than 4.5% by 2025-26, are we leaving too much of the moderation for the last two years?

The contraction by 1.4 percentage points over two years, I would agree is challenging, but I think it is feasible. It is a bit backloaded, but given the macro-economic cycle and where we are and where global growth is likely to be in the coming financial year, we just felt that growth is the biggest source of fiscal consolidation. Good growth is actually the best way to consolidate rather than consolidate through expenditure and stifle growth. It's a bit of a trade-off so if we could slightly press the accelerator this

year, and if growth is kept up, then that eases the consolidation in the years to come because the consolidation required is 0.7% (per year). But if GDP is buoyant, it would be easier to do. On the other hand, even if it was a lower target figure, but if GDP was very slow, it'll be more difficult. So we have tried to keep it in sort of a Goldilocks balance – not too much consolidation, nor are we saying, we'll leave everything for the future.

How does the Budget address current account deficit concerns?

Current account is higher than it should be, let me put it that way. Hopefully, if oil prices don't rise, then the coming year should be better because the biggest negative influence in the last year was the oil and gas sector. I am just hoping that the Ukraine conflict doesn't intensify or lead to any new convulsions in the petroleum market. Also, I think the fact that the interest rates in India are now reasonably aligned with the West and there are not likely to be too many interest rate rises from abroad could mean that overall, the capital flows will remain steady and we may not see much pullout from India. So, on the whole, I think the current account situation will be manageable through an easing of import costs on petroleum particularly, and easing on gold, silver, platinum through customs duty ac-



Budget philosophy: We have tried to keep it in sort of a Goldilocks balance - not too much consolidation nor left everything to future.

tion, which has happened, and possibly some reasonably favourable capital account inflows.

So we don't expect much from exports?

Exports, with the global situation, no... But again, the positive side for us is our weakness as an export powerhouse is our strength when exports are declining. Because we are not so intensive in exports, unlike East Asia or somewhere else. United States' recession hits East Asia pretty hard, much harder.

The personal income tax revamp aims to put more money into hands of people. Is that a way of pushing consumption or meant to dissuade savings of a kind?

That's a very good question but as an economist, I don't agree with the perception that the old regime encourages saving. For the

simple reason, if you look at the structure of the tax deductions, half of them are for savings and half of them are for dis-savings like housing loan or interest on housing loan. Is the housing loan a saving? So overall macro economic impact, it's not a savings push at all but merely a push towards certain things. Government wants you to do housing, insurance or pension. But it's not necessarily a savings push or influence the savings rate in the country. Second, there is a regressivity in this when it comes to the low-paid salaried class. You can say that somebody can take ₹3 lakh benefits from section 80C, ELSS and such deductions. A man who is actually at an income of ₹9 lakh is unable to save that much. They have expenses for family, children's school fees, uniforms, transport... After that, for him to maximise the deductions is impossible. The break-even

amount at which people will shift – someone earning ₹7.5 lakh will have to save ₹1.62 lakh to be better off in the old system. This may be possible, but very few people who are really salaried will be able to save. The average salaried, low-paid person like a driver or an industrial employee, even if earning ₹8 lakh, doesn't actually statistically save so much and actually end up paying more tax in the old system than they will pay in the new system.

You have raised small savings deposits limits for a couple of schemes and launched a new scheme for women. So are we looking at tapping small savings more for financing?

Yes, we have shown a fair increase in small savings next year, which has also helped keep market borrowings [lower]. But it is not an enormous amount – it's just going from ₹4,25,000 crore last year to ₹4,71,000 crore. But that will happen because of these changes.

You have kept market borrowings at a reasonable level, but will rising rates affect financing costs?

Not directly for the government. For the incremental borrowing that we do in terms of our total stock of government borrowing, is such that even a 0.25% change doesn't have a huge

impact. Let's look at our borrowing program. It's about ₹15 lakh crore, if there is a change of 1%, it's ₹15,000 crore. Now, 1% is not going to happen. Even half of that rise will mean just ₹7,500 crore, so the annual impact is small. Of course, there's a net present value impact for the life of the security but it's not of a magnitude that big. And I often tell bankers that you are looking at secondary market price impact. I am not in the secondary market. For me, this yield curve impact is very small. It only what actually affects me on what I'm borrowing now. I don't have to mark-to-market my old securities. Therefore, it doesn't impact us as much as it impacts banks.

What about allocations to education, health?

Health and education, I understand people's angst that we should spend more on these. The key problem... at least in education particularly, is not money. We have more teachers than we need in the teacher to pupil ratio, and child population is declining demographically. It's not quantity in education. It is quality, whether the teacher attends the school. Does he teach well? These are not money. So actually pushing more money into education will achieve nothing. It's the same in higher education. Don't we have enough universities... you have to depoliticise the university.

Meaning

The term "Goldilocks on fiscal deficit" refers to the idea that a government's fiscal deficit should not be too high or too

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	<p>low, but rather it should be just right.</p> <p>In other words, the fiscal deficit should be at a level that is sustainable and supports economic growth without risking high inflation or excessive debt. This idea suggests that there is an optimal level of fiscal deficit that allows the government to finance its spending priorities, while also maintaining the stability of the economy. It is a balance between spending and revenues that ensures that the government can meet its obligations and maintain financial stability.</p>
<p>How Goldilock approach can be applied in different aspects of public administration?</p> <p><i>#BeyondTheWriteUp</i></p>	<p>1. Budgeting: The Goldilocks approach can be applied to budgeting by finding the right balance between spending too much and too little. If too much money is spent, there may be budget deficits and financial instability, while too little spending may result in inadequate funding for critical public services. A balanced budget that meets the needs of citizens without compromising fiscal stability is the goal.</p> <p>2. Regulation: In regulation, the Goldilocks approach means finding the right balance between too much and too little regulation. Too much regulation can stifle economic growth and innovation, while too little regulation can result in environmental and public health risks. An effective</p>

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regulatory system finds the sweet spot between these extremes, providing protection while allowing for growth.

3.Public Services: The Goldilocks approach can also be applied to public services by finding the right level of service delivery. Too much service delivery may lead to wastage of resources, while too little service delivery may lead to dissatisfaction among citizens. Public services should be delivered at an optimal level that meets the needs of citizens while remaining cost-effective.

4.Decision Making: In decision making, the Goldilocks approach means finding the right balance between autocratic decision-making and participative decision-making. Autocratic decision-making may result in unilateral decisions that do not consider diverse perspectives, while participative decision-making may lead to indecisiveness and lack of accountability. The optimal approach is to strike a balance between these two extremes, incorporating different viewpoints while maintaining the ability to make timely decisions.

5.Human Resource Management: The Goldilocks approach can be applied in HR management to strike a balance between overstaffing and understaffing.

Off-Budget borrowings – a State wise look

#TheHindu

Off-Budget borrowings – a State-wise look

Unlike other States, Karnataka accounts its off-Budget loans in its debt calculation

DATA POINT

Jasmin Nihalani

While tabling the Budget a week ago, Telangana Finance Minister T. Harish Rao accused the Centre of “creating hurdles after hurdles” in the development of the State. He said that the State had resorted to off-Budget borrowings to complete irrigation projects in the shortest time but the Centre had imposed borrowing limits. This cut in borrowing limit, he argued, was against the “spirit of federalism”.

Off-Budget borrowings are loans obtained by government entities, such as PSUs or special purpose vehicles, on behalf of the government to finance its expenditure. According to the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, these borrowings are not included while computing the debt and the fiscal deficit of the State governments. However, the State government is responsible for repaying the loan and servicing the debt from its Budget.

As extra-Budgetary borrowings find no mention in the Budget documents, one has to rely on the CAG reports to ascertain the figures. Five Southern States – Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka – accounted for ₹2.34 lakh crore, around 93%, of the total off-Budget liabilities of eleven major States analysed.

As of March 2021, Telangana had the highest burden of such loans followed by Andhra Pradesh. Chart 1 shows the State-wise off-Budget borrowings by the end of March 2021 in rupees crore.

Andhra Pradesh had an off-Budget borrowing of ₹86,260 crore. The State's Civil Supplies Corporation accounted for 35% of the borrowing, while the Andhra Pradesh Power Finance Corporation's share was 18%. Chart 2 breaks down Andhra Pradesh's off-Budget borrowing undertaken by government-owned entities. The CAG's

contention is that resorting to extra-budgetary resources will lead them to a debt trap.

“Fiscal rules related threshold deficit ratios and increasingly volatile intergovernmental transfers have affected the fiscal space of States. [Hence] they resort to OBB for financing [and] ...innovate alternative sources of financing.... For instance, Telangana has resorted to restructure the debt maturity. They postponed the refinancing risks by resorting to long term securities. Kerala has resorted to KIFFB (corporate entity) to engage in OBB for financing infrastructure,” Lekha Chakraborty of the NIPFP told The Hindu.

In almost all States, if the off-Budget loans were added to their declared debt, it can take their debt-to-GSDP ratio even further away from State targets. Table 3 shows four ratios – debt-to-GSDP excluding off-Budget loans, debt-to-GSDP including off-Budget loans, off-Budget loans-to-debt, and finally State target for debt-to-GSDP.

Barring Karnataka, the debt-to-GSDP ratio exceeded the target in all States already. If off-Budget loans were also factored in, it raised a States' debt-to-GSDP ratio further.

For instance, in Andhra Pradesh, outstanding liabilities were 35.3% of the GSDP, which was slightly higher than State's target of 35%. But if the off-Budget borrowings were included, the State's debt-to-GSDP ratio shot up to 44%. Karnataka already accounts off-Budget borrowing in its debt calculation, unlike the others.

Further, the guarantees given by the States to PSUs and SPVs to raise loans or borrowings from banks have also been witnessing a rising trend. According to the data from an RBI paper that evaluates State finances, the guarantees issued by States as a share of GSDP have been on a rising trend in all the States shown except West Bengal. Chart 4 shows the guarantees issued by States as a share of GSDP.

Off the books

The charts and tables are based on data sourced from the State Finance Audit Reports published for the financial year 2020-21, by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India



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Chart 1: State-wise off-Budget borrowings by the end of March 2021 in ₹ crore

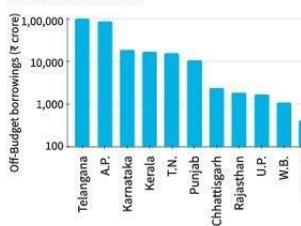


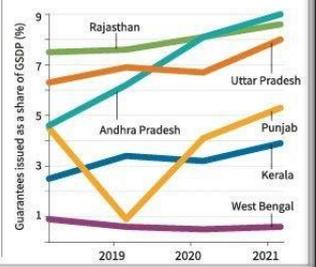
Chart 2: Andhra Pradesh's off-Budget borrowings by government-owned entities by the end of March 2021 in ₹ crore



Table 3: Four debt related ratios (all figures in %)

State	Declared debt/ GSDP (excluding off-Budget)	Debt/GSDP (including off-Budget)	Off-Budget borrowings/ debt	State's targets
A.P.	35.3	44.0	24.8	35
Chhattisgarh	25.6	26.2	2.6	21.59
Haryana	31.2	31.3	0.2	21.14
Karnataka	22.4	22.4	4.6	25
Kerala	39.9	42.0	5.4	29.67
Punjab	47.1	49.1	4.2	38.53
Rajasthan	42.4	42.6	0.4	38.2
T.N.	26.9	27.7	3.0	25.2
Telangana	28.1	38.1	35.5	25
U.P.	32.8	32.9	0.3	32
W.B.	37.0	37.1	0.2	34.3

Chart 4: Guarantees issued by States as a share of GSDP



 **Audit Data Standardisation**
#TheHinduBusinessLine #Outlook

<p>Context</p>	<p>CAG Girish Chandra Murmu underlined the need for adopting 'Audit Data Standards' to the Government, which will help not only policymakers and executives, but the auditors in carrying out digital audits.</p> <p>In order to have an overview on the theme 'Responsible AI', especially in the context of India, the CAG hosted a seminar inviting eminent personalities to speak and share their expertise on the subject.</p> <p>The CAG said that such standards will ensure that the data/information maintained by various departments and agencies can be seamlessly organised for better analysis.</p>
<p>Lack of audit standardization</p>	<p>Large volumes of data collected by different government agencies and departments are not shared, even among the departments.</p> <p>The data shared is often not available in a machine-readable format.</p> <p>It cannot be integrated with data from other sources to help develop multi-dimensional insights.</p> <p>There is over-reliance on data collection through surveys. These are released at a considerable lag, which diminishes their usefulness</p> <p>There is a considerable lack of</p>

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	awareness regarding currently available data sources.
Other Issues	<p>Lack of independence: Auditors in India are often not completely independent, as they are appointed by the companies they are auditing. This can lead to conflicts of interest and compromises in the quality of the audit. The appointment of CAG is not upholding the federalism principle.</p> <p>Limited scope: The current audit system in India is primarily focused on financial reporting and accounting, with limited emphasis on other important areas such as corporate governance, risk management, and sustainability.</p> <p>Poor quality: The quality of audits in India has been called into question in recent years due to several high-profile financial scandals, such as the fraud at Punjab National Bank and Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services. This has raised concerns about the competence and ethics of auditors in India.</p> <p>Chaotic accounts of state companies: Out of about 900 State government companies, the Annual Accounts of about 700 companies are in arrears for periods as long as ten to twelve years.</p> <p>Regulatory oversight: The regulatory oversight of auditors in India is also weak, with limited powers and resources to enforce compliance and</p>

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	<p>investigate potential violations. This has allowed some auditors to operate with impunity, despite questionable practices.</p> <p>Limited competition: The audit market in India is dominated by a few large firms, which limits competition and can lead to a lack of innovation and diversity in auditing practices.</p> <p>Limited liability: Auditors in India also face limited liability for their actions, which can reduce their incentives to conduct rigorous and independent audits. This has also led to a lack of accountability for auditors in cases of financial fraud or misreporting.</p> <p>No Powers to Enforce Audit Findings: While the audit notices a systematic violation of law, rules, and regulations by departmental officers, it is unable to take effective action to prevent them.</p>
<p>Ways for Data standardization and evidence-based decision making #Vision_IAS_Feb2023</p>	<p>Data integration and quality assurance: Most of the administrative and survey data are generated at the state level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is recommended that after going through the process of quality assurance, where discrepancies are removed, and formats are standardized, the data should be integrated into a state data repository. ➤ Here, the implementation of the Draft National Data Governance Framework Policy

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	<p>for modernisation of data collection and management can be fast tracked.</p> <p>Interoperability of data: Enable data sharing in real-time through Application Programming Interfaces (API) between data stored across different databases and across ministries in a central location for easy access by the public.</p> <p>Adoption of technology: Both administrative and survey data need to be collected in digital formats across various sectors in real time to move from paper-based to digitally driven operations.</p> <p>Localisation of Data: Ensure availability of data at a more granular level – village/block/district.</p> <p>Role of tertiary big data: For better governance and evidence-based policymaking, it is recommended that tertiary big data collected by private third parties should be used.</p> <p>Skill development and restructuring: Data scientists with multiple skills in the areas of statistics, analytics, computer science, and programming should be incorporated into the Indian government.</p>
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7. PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION

✚ Social Media Rules for Police @ UP #TheIE



<p>Context</p>	<p>The Uttar Pradesh Police has issued a new social media policy called Social Media Police-2023 for its three lakh police personnel.</p> <p>The policy outlines dos and don'ts for the police on social media.</p>
<p>Key Features of Social Media Police-2023</p>	<p>According to the policy, police personnel are not allowed to use personal social media accounts during duty hours.</p> <p>Uploading reels or videos in police uniform during or after duty hours is also banned.</p> <p>Uploading videos or reels of police drills, conversations with complainants, or revealing the identity of rape victims or juvenile offenders on social media is not allowed.</p> <p>Police personnel have to seek</p>

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	<p>permission from their superiors to conduct or take part in webinars, lectures, or classes.</p> <p>They are also not allowed to comment on government policies, programs, political parties, personalities, or ideologies on social media.</p> <p>Police personnel cannot join or create a WhatsApp group or page that is against the police department or government or is created in the name of caste, community, or regionalism.</p> <p>They cannot post photos with any person who is involved in criminal or anti-social activities. Photos or videos of accused persons can be posted only after blurring their faces.</p> <p>If police personnel post anything online, it must come with the disclaimer that it represents their personal views and has nothing to do with the police force.</p>
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8. PUBLIC POLICY



“Skin in the game” approach

#TheHindu

Lessons from Hindenburg’s ‘skin in the game’ approach

During election season, television is replete with election surveys by various pollsters predicting winners, vote shares and the seat tally of political parties. Suppose there are two television channels, A and B, making forecasts for a particular election but channel B qualifies its prediction with a bet using its own money. It stands to gain big if its predictions come true but loses all if they go wrong. Which pollster are you likely to believe more, A or B? Chances are you may trust channel B more because its incentives are aligned with its predictions. In the words of Lebanese mathematician and philosopher Nassim Taleb, channel B has ‘skin in the game’, an ethical principle of symmetric incentives and accountability.

A moral dilemma

Extending this thought experiment, assume that channel B’s predictions come true and it makes a significant profit from its bet. It is perhaps possible that channel B’s predictions may have influenced some voters to vote in a manner that reinforced its prediction. But an election outcome is dependent on a multitude of various factors. Should the fact that channel B gained financially from its predictions change your view about the merits of its survey? Would you rather have channel A’s survey or regardless of its profits, is channel B’s ‘skin in the game’ survey more preferred? The moral dilemma posed by this thought experiment is at the root of the ongoing Hindenburg Research versus Adani saga.

Hindenburg, a firm that places bets in the stock and bond markets, published a voluminous research report that raised grave allegations about the business ethics of the Adani group of companies and manipulation of share price to inflate the value. Hindenburg also took a large financial bet on the veracity of its report by engaging in a ‘short sale’ of Adani shares that gain when prices fall. Adani shares plummeted and Hindenburg ostensibly made a financial killing.

The Solicitor General of India questioned the motives of Hindenburg in the Supreme Court of India and argued that its report is a fallacious alibi to drive the share price down deliberately and profit from this. Commentators empathetic



Praveen Chakravarty

is a political economist and Chairman, Data Analytics for the Congress party

The research firm’s willingness to take a financial bet is what lent credibility to its findings, a point that journalists, scientists and commentators must note

towards the Modi government (this includes a former Vice Chair of NITI Aayog, a former Chief Economic Adviser, a former Foreign Secretary and many others) have jumped in to cast aspersions on Hindenburg’s motives, notwithstanding the fact that Hindenburg would have lost a lot of money had it been proven wrong. The irony is that Hindenburg’s report has alleged that the Adani Group had deployed a grand scheme using offshore entities and related parties to manipulate its share price and gain from its rise, which is now being castigated as a mischievous report to manipulate the same Adani shares to profit from its fall. This prompts the counterfactual question: had Hindenburg published the exact same research report without making a financial bet, would it be deemed more credible?

There is empirical evidence to show that it may have been Hindenburg’s ‘skin in the game’ approach that helped establish its credibility among market participants. In August 2022, another foreign research firm, CreditSights, published a similar report raising questions on the governance practices and share valuations of the Adani Group. The group responded to those allegations, albeit without any reference to ‘Jalianwalla Bagh’ or a national flag (tapping into nationalism), as it did in its response to the Hindenburg report. The CreditSights report did not elicit much of an uproar and the stock market brushed it off with no impact on the share price of the Adani companies.

In fact, there have been at least eight such news or research reports in the last four years by similar foreign publications (Bloomberg, *The Guardian* and Morgan Stanley) about the Adani Group’s alleged dubious business practices and share price movements. None of them seemed to have had the impact that the Hindenburg report has had. Arguably, it is because of Hindenburg’s willingness to take a financial bet that lent credibility to its findings than a mere report.

A sign of veracity

The idea that one stands to lose if wrong is a very important signal of veracity, especially in times of fake and motivated news. To claim that the Hindenburg report is a grand devious plot to

engineer a fall in the share price and profit is akin to claiming that a pollster engineered an entire election’s outcome to ensure his prediction comes true and he gains financially. The financial market, like the electoral marketplace, is too complex and multivariate to be manipulated so easily. To be clear, I am not claiming markets are efficient and ‘unmanipulable’. If any, they are more wrong than right. But there is a difference between distortions in market structures versus a symmetric incentive structure. It is common practice in financial markets for investors who/that buy shares, to talk them up in the hope of influencing others to buy these shares and drive the price up. This is deemed a legitimate practice and no one frowns upon it. But the exact symmetrical idea of talking down a company and ‘short selling’ its shares seems to elicit an outcry of ‘schadenfreude’, which is illogical.

Illegality versus immorality

In essence, Hindenburg alleged that the Adani Group inflated its stock price illegally to gain. Adani’s backers allege that Hindenburg deflated its stock price immorally to gain. While the charge of immorality is baseless, nevertheless, it is important to make a distinction between the two, as the Supreme Court deliberates this matter soon. Illegality is profoundly different from immorality. One can have a legitimate debate over whether it is ethically reasonable to profit from a fall in the share price as it is to profit from its rise – but that is beyond the scope of the Hindenburg versus Adani matter and ‘short sale’.

Taleb posits that the philosophical idea of ‘skin in the game’ of symmetrical rewards and penalties is very important to cultivate trust and trustworthiness in societies. Contrary to the argument of Adani’s backers, Hindenburg’s ‘short sale’ bet signalled confidence and trust in its research and played a critical role in the exposé of Adani’s alleged financial shenanigans. This was neither illegal nor unethical. If any, such a ‘skin in the game’ approach where journalists, scientists and commentators are held accountable for their words and actions can help reduce the menace of fake news, ‘hit jobs’ and the ‘tyranny of experts’, and instead enhance trust in society and reduce discord.

Context

Refer to Article

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<p>The "skin in the game" approach</p>	<p>The "skin in the game" approach is a concept that suggests that individuals or entities should have a personal stake or risk involved in a decision, activity, or outcome, rather than relying solely on external incentives or consequences. In other words, people who have "skin in the game" have something to lose if things go wrong and something to gain if things go right. Eg- Employees Stock Option Plan (ESOP)</p> <p>Nassim Nicholas Taleb: The author and risk analyst Nassim Nicholas Taleb is perhaps the most famous advocate of the "skin in the game" approach in recent times. He argues that individuals should not be able to benefit from risky decisions without also sharing in the downside risks. He believes that this would encourage more responsible decision-making, and reduce the likelihood of catastrophic failures.</p>
<p>How to navigate "skin in the game" approach and "conflicts of interest" in administration?</p>	<p>Disclose COI and maintain transparency, high ethical standards!!</p>
<p>ThinkersConnection -</p>	<p>Peter Drucker: The management guru Peter Drucker believed that managers should have a financial stake in their organizations, as this would motivate them to make better decisions. He argued that having "skin in the game" would encourage managers to focus on the long-term health of their organizations, rather than short-term gains.</p>

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9. PHILOSOPHICAL & CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK OF GOVERNMENT

✚ North Star of Democracy = Parliament

#TheHindu

Note the Jargon!!

Parliament is 'North Star' of democracy, says Vice-President

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

Stepping up the Legislature versus Judiciary debate, Vice-President and Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar on Friday said that Parliament is the "North Star" of democracy.

The remark came just days after Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud's said at a seminar that the Basic Structure doctrine was the North Star that "gives direction to the interpreters and implementers of the Constitution when the path ahead is convoluted".

Without directly referring to the CJI's comment, Mr. Dhankhar, while chiding the Opposition members who were demanding a debate into the Adani issue in the Rajya Sabha, said, "Parliament is the essence of democracy. Parliament is the North Star of democracy. It is a place for discussion and delibera-

tion to realise the aspirations and dreams of the people and not a place of disturbance. We are required to work in accordance with rules."

Mr. Dhankhar has been consistent in his criticism of the Judiciary "overstepping its boundaries". He has also questioned the landmark 1973 *Kesavananda Bharati* verdict on the Basic Structure doctrine. He said the verdict set a "bad precedent" and if any authority questioned Parliament's power to amend the Constitution, it would be "difficult to say we are a democratic nation".

Commenting on the variance between the stance taken by Mr. Dhankhar and Justice Chandrachud, Congress MP Vivek Tankha tweeted, "Parliament is the essence of democracy, whilst the Basic Structure doctrine is the bed rock & spirit of democracy. And we all are soldiers of democracy. Long live Indian Democracy."

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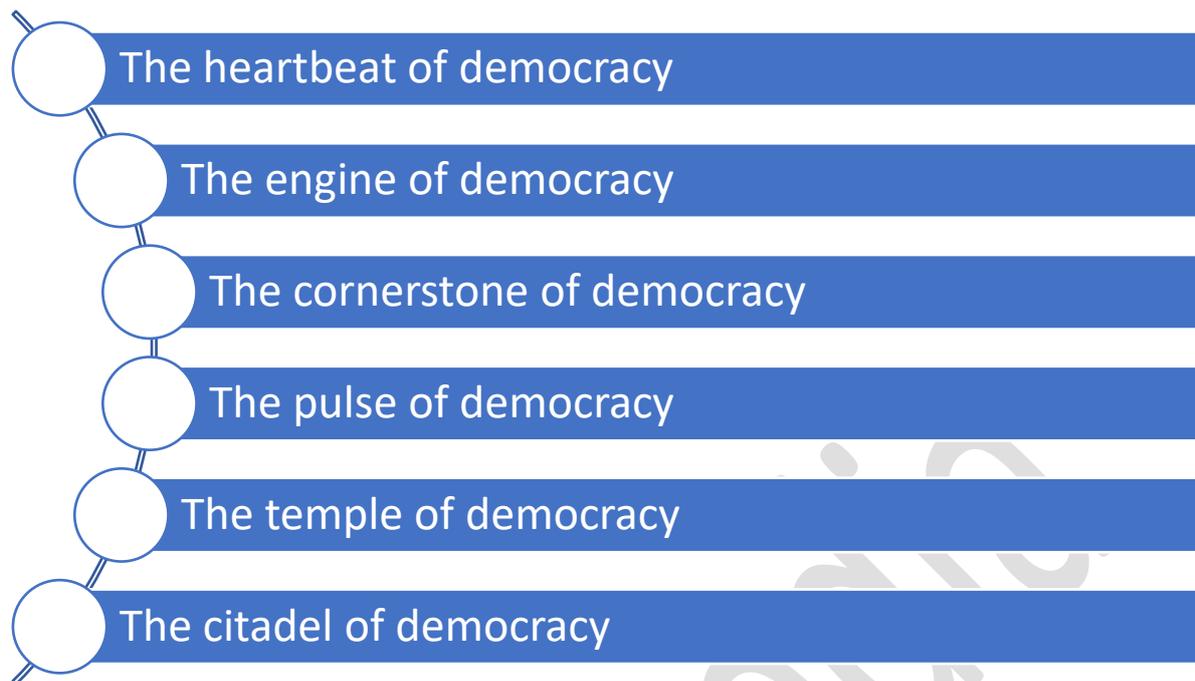


Fig. PhD on “Parliament”

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Protect the Little Man in Democracy #TheHindu

Protect the power of 'the little man' in a democracy

The nation may have celebrated "Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav", on the completion of 75 years of Independence and the 74th anniversary of the founding of the Republic, but there are still deep contradictions in the country. Abject poverty prevails, there is a deepening divide between the rich and the poor, precarious conditions affect the rule of law, and not-so-good governance poses grave challenges to the very existence of democracy and the republic.

The nation stands polarised on religious and caste lines, resulting in the creation of deep distrust, if not animosity. The party in power at the Centre is unwilling to cede an inch to the Opposition to maintain a vibrant democracy. There is a constant targeting of the Opposition, as verbal attacks and political destabilisation of governments in Opposition-ruled States, through political machinations and "raids" and "checks" by several core central agencies.

With weakened constitutional safeguards and institutions, the judiciary, including the Supreme Court of India, has been slow to stop these attacks. For example, the floor test that the judiciary applies only seems to aid the efforts of the ruling party in bringing down Opposition governments, and is a completely futile judicial weapon. The judiciary needs to innovate to stop the luring of elected MLAs, in order to protect the power of the "little man" in a democracy, as Sir Winston Churchill described it.

From the pages of the past

So, where is the *Amrit*? Our constitutional framers had envisaged a different India, as Constitutional Assembly debates show. H.V. Kamath on November 5, 1948, had said, "I hope that we in India will go forward and try to make the State exist for the individual rather than the individual for the State...At least let us try to bring about this empire of the spirit in our own political institutions. If we do not do this, our attempt today in this Assembly would not truly reflect the political genius of the Indian people... India of the ages is not dead nor has she spoken her last creative word; she lives and has still something to do for herself and for the human family."

Have we marched in this direction over seven decades? For those who perpetuate polarisation, an incident narrated by H.V. Kamath is the answer. Referring to the 1927 Congress session in Madras, he narrates, "Pandit Madam Mohan Malviya asked Muslims, 'What safeguards did you ask from the Secretary of State for India or from the Government of India? We are here. What better safeguards do you want?'" After that



Dushyant Dave

is Senior Advocate in the Supreme Court of India and former President of the Supreme Court Bar Association

The real challenge before the nation is how to make citizens, now bystanders, aware of their duties to defend the Constitution

speech, Maulana Muhammad Ali came to the rostrum, embraced Pandit Malviya and said, "I do not want any safeguards. We want to live as Indians, as part of the Indian body politic. We want no safeguards from the British Government. Pandit Malviya is our best safeguard."

Constitutionally, the republic that was envisioned by the framers was what George Grote the historian had desired. B.R. Ambedkar quotes him reverentially (on November 4, 1948), "a paramount reverence for the forms of the Constitution, enforcing obedience to authority acting under and within these forms yet combined with the habit of open speech, of action subject only to definite legal control, and unrestrained censure of those very authorities as to all their public acts combined too with a perfect confidence in the bosom of every citizen amidst the bitterness of party contest that the forms of the Constitution will not be less sacred in the eyes of his opponents than in his own". But then, B.R. Ambedkar expresses his fear thereupon, saying, "The other is that it is perfectly possible to prevent the Constitution, without changing its form by merely changing the form of the administration and making it inconsistent and opposed to the spirit of the Constitution. The question is, can we presume such a diffusion of Constitutional morality?"

Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top-dressing on Indian soil, which is essentially undemocratic."

Opposition, a 'necessary evil'

The failure of the constitutional and administrative authorities to work as per the letter and spirit of the Constitution shows how undemocratic India is. Discussing the importance of Opposition members of the Constituent Assembly, Z.H. Lari, said on May 20, 1949, "... everyone knows that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely... It is also a truism to say that every party that comes into power tries to make it hold permanent. The only check on the degeneration of party government into despotism is the existence of another party that keeps a strict eye on the doings of the cabinet and the party and thereby prevents the degeneration of a party government into a dictatorship. Besides, there cannot be a proper functioning of any party government unless there is constant criticism of the doings of that party."

T.T. Krishnamachari said, "I have no doubt the future parliament and those who are going to be in charge of the destinies of this country would

bear in mind the suggestion of Mr. Lari to pay a salary to the Leader of the Opposition, if that would encourage the creation of an Opposition, of a healthy Opposition Party."

M.A. Ayyangar said, "I agree there ought to be a healthy opposition... I am really surprised to see ... the very protagonist of this healthy opposition had ample opportunity and I do not know why he did not start an opposition... Are their actions calculated to improve the welfare of the Country, much better than what the Congress party has stated in its manifesto?" Biswanath Das felt that the "opposition is a necessary evil and that the function of the opposition is to give the party in power full work".

The Congress, which dominated this country for almost four decades, sought to perpetuate its power, post-independence, by preventing a healthy Opposition. The dismissal of governments in Opposition-ruled States was its key weapon. Yet, today, the Congress and other members of the Opposition have been forced to complain about the state of democracy.

But are they collectively a healthy opposition? Their utterances and actions cause bewilderment. Are their actions calculated to improve the welfare of the country? Their not speaking in one voice only leaves a clear path for the ruling party to win election after election.

The challenge before the nation is on how to make citizens aware of their duties to defend the Constitution. People are now just bystanders before the political class which is making freedom irrelevant. In Israel, the proposals of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to undermine the judiciary are being strongly resisted. But what do we have in our nation today?

The failure to have a strong and healthy Opposition is causing the ruling party to perpetuate its position in a dictatorial manner. Constant attacks on the Supreme Court of India by Ministers and others show the scant regard for a healthy democracy. The ruling party must remember what Ram Narayan Singh once said, "In this country we have just got freedom, and our own party, i.e., the Congress Party, has got no opposition to it. I have seen how things have been going on here and I feel that there must be a strong opposition to criticise our actions and review them... A Government which does not like opposition and always wants to be in power is not a patriotic but a traitor Government."

Let us hope and pray that the party in power and the Opposition will realise their duties and responsibilities towards the Constitution, respect the wishes of the framers of the Constitution, and work for the welfare of the people of India.

Summary

Philosophical Frameworks-

1. Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment. It has to be cultivated. We must realize that our people have yet to learn it. Democracy in India is only a top dressing on Indian soil, which is essentially undemocratic."

2. State exist for the individual rather than the individual for the State...At least let us try to bring

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about this empire of the spirit in our own political institutions.

Message for Judiciary-
 judiciary needs to innovate to stop the luring of elected MLAs, in order to protect the power of the “little man” in a democracy, as Sir Winston Churchill described it.

Message for Opposition -

1. Biswanath Das felt that the “opposition is a necessary evil and that the function of the opposition is to give the party in power full work”.
2. Healthy Opposition improve the welfare of the country.
3. Ensures Accountability!!

Message for Ruling Party -

The ruling party must remember what Ram Narayan Singh once said, “In this country we have just got freedom, and our own party, i.e., the Congress Party, has got no opposition to it. I have seen how things have been going on here and I feel that there must be a strong opposition to criticise our actions and review them.... A Government which does not like opposition and always wants to be in power is not a patriotic but a traitor Government.”

Message for People -

1. The challenge before the nation is on how to make citizens aware of their duties to defend the Constitution. People are now just bystanders before the political class which is making freedom irrelevant
2. Democracy is not mere "spectator's sports". Participation is important!!

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Social Media and Democratization

#TheHindu

A 'democratisation' that is more a fallacy

Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else's opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation," said Oscar Wilde.

From the beginning, social media platforms have trumpeted that they have 'democratised' self-expression. In important ways, this is true. Social media platforms have facilitated the circumvention of elite and/or authoritarian gatekeeping and have brought new voices into the public sphere. This has had a decidedly mixed effect on the public sphere. However, the impact of social media on democratic discourse is a separate debate. The purpose here is to dig deeper into the premise that social media platforms have democratised self-expression.

An abridgement of the long form

A review of the trajectory of self-expression on social media shows a trend towards increasing brevity and homogeneity. The early days of online discourse centered around long-form text on blogs and message boards. This required individuals to think through the substance of what they wanted to say and then articulate it in their own words to communicate to their audience. Even if the content itself was nonsensical, it required conscious engagement, certainly from the writer but also the reader, who would need to specifically seek out that particular content and spend time reading and responding to it in her own words. With the advent of social media, long-form text has gone through a series of abridgements, from posts to tweets to retweets, likes, memes, and emojis.

Now, one of the most striking things about online communication is how little people speak. Speak in their own words that is. It is worth asking at what point in this trajectory does engagement stop being a form of self-expression but instead becomes a tool for mass homogenisation. It is unclear how by repeatedly replacing one's own words with those of another



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Even as social media platforms have brought new voices into the public sphere, it is worth looking deeper into the premise – of their democratisation of self-expression

individual (through retweets, likes and memes) or a corporation (via emojis), any individual can find her own voice. This question is relevant also because the time spent on these discrete engagements is too fleeting to allow active involvement. Does a retweet or like indicate 100% endorsement or merely fluid alignment with the "spirit" of the content? And, if we do not take the time to reflect and articulate specifically what we feel, instead of merely reiterating someone else, does it qualify as self-expression?

This question needs to be asked because social media moulds expression to fit its own format instead of vice versa. Retweets and likes are binary instruments which leave no room for personal nuance. Memes and emojis constrain articulation to the selection at hand, shaping instead of facilitating self-expression. Are people really laughing till they are crying as the popular emoji (a smiley) seems to suggest? And if not, does its use denote self-expression or artifice shaped by an external platform? What too of the ambiguity which gets injected into communication due to variable interpretations by different individuals for various emojis and memes?

Social media also forces brevity – due to its format and the larger ecosystem it has spawned – which shows up not just as typographical errors and poor grammar but also constraints on the possibilities of what can be said. This limits, instead of enhancing, the fullness of self-expression.

However, it is not just the structure of social media platforms which inhibits self-expression but also the incentives. An important emerging discussion focuses on how the incentives of social media shape the discourse by privileging antagonism, snark and outrage over dialogue and reason. This in turn prods individuals to become more antagonistic and outrageous with the effect that the medium dictates the message. This influence of the medium on the message is visible

also in making virality the primary determinant of value instead of the substance of the message itself.

The 'creator economy'

The ability of social media platforms to abridge expression is also playing out in the so-called "creator economy". In order to improve user stickiness and engagement, social media platforms have started compensating users for original audiovisual content. While sites such as YouTube allowed individuals to create their own video channels and shared ad-revenue based on views, platforms have increasingly moved to shorter video formats ranging from 15 to 60 seconds. These videos are served up algorithmically and there are many reports of befuddled creators trying to hack the algorithm and make their content go viral. It is unclear, in this mix of super short videos, preoccupation with algorithms, and directed viewers, whether the creator has or can have a specific point of view and if there is much room for "self-expression". In fact, a significant portion of "content" is merely rehashed cuts of existing content.

With the emergence of generative AI such as ChatGPT and Dall-E for text and images, respectively, there is a high possibility that "self-expression" will be further diminished by making it easy to generate content without requiring the individual to apply herself in any meaningful manner.

The undeniable fact is that social media platforms are a capitalist enterprise. Even though capitalism seemingly thrives on increasing user choice, standardisation and mass production are natural corollaries of capitalism. Social media platforms thus promote ever greater homogenisation and mass production of ready-made expressions such as memes and emoji because they are interested not in promoting self-expression but engagement.

Negative Impact of "Social Media" on Democratization <As given in above Article >

It puts constraints on the possibilities of what can be said. This limits the **scope of self-expression.**

The incentives of social media privileges **antagonism, outrage over dialogue and reason.** It compels individuals to become **more antagonistic and outrageous.** The effect is that the medium dictates the message.

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	<p>The ability of social media platforms for short messaging is impacting the “creator economy”. In order to improve user engagement, social media platforms have started compensating users for original audiovisual content.</p> <p>Platforms have increasingly moved to shorter video formats ranging from 15 to 60 seconds. There are many reports of creators trying to hack the algorithms.</p> <p>With the emergence of generative AI such as ChatGPT for text and images, there is a high possibility that “self-expression” will be further diminished. It will make it easy to generate content without requiring the individual to apply herself in any meaningful manner.</p>
<p><u>Other Negative Impact</u></p>	<p>Political Polarization: One of the most common criticisms of social media is that it creates echo chambers where people only see viewpoints they agree with — further driving us apart. As unprecedented numbers of people channel their political energy through this medium, it’s being used in unforeseen ways with societal repercussions that were never anticipated.</p> <p>Propaganda Setting: According to Google Transparency Report, political parties mostly in the last two years have spent around \$800 million (Rs</p>

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	<p>5,900 crore) on election ads. Micro-targeting can enable dishonest campaigns to spread toxic discourse without much consequence. Foreign Interference: Around the US 2016 election, Russian entities set up and promoted fake Pages on Facebook to influence public sentiment — essentially using social media as an information weapon. In this way, social media enables nation-states to use these platforms to wage a cyberwar intended to divide society.</p> <p>Fake News: Social media gives people more voice and can sometimes be used, by anyone, to spread hoaxes and misinformation.</p> <p>Unequal Participation: Social media also distorts policymakers’ perception of public opinion. This is because it is believed that social media platforms tend to represent every walk of life, but not everyone is using their voice equally.</p>
<p><u>Positive Impact</u></p>	<p>Digital Democracy: Democratic values can evolve when people have freedom of expression. In this way, social media enables the concept of digital democracy through these platforms of freedom.</p> <p>Setting Accountability: Social media acts as an instrument that can question the seemingly invincible governments, make them accountable and bring sustained change driven by people beyond one vote in years.</p>

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Giving Voice: Social media has enormous power to keep people informed. This can be seen, when social media played a critical role in the Arab Spring in places like Tunisia, it was heralded as a technology for liberation.

Civic Engagement: Social media's implications for civic engagement are profound, as many people tend to discuss & debate news over these platforms. It has long been observed that when people discuss the news, they're more likely to be involved in their community, whether by volunteering or reaching out to elected officials.



Post-Cleavage Political Parties

#TheHindu

Note- Read in context of Political Culture.

A right reading of post-cleavage political parties

The rise of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) is often represented in the popular media as the triumph of a post-ideological politics. Such a facile notion stems from an erroneous division of politics into an "ideological realm" (the domain of cleavage politics), and a "good governance realm" (the domain of aggregative politics). Thus, we end up in a situation where we try to understand the success of AAP without any reference to its crucial ideological underpinnings.

It is a significant analytical mistake, not least because ideology can power the dynamic of both cleavage politics (the differential mobilisation of competing social groups) as well as aggregative politics (the construction of a dominant coalition spanning across social groups). The grounding of AAP's aggregative politics within a clear ideological framework is not only crucial for a sharper appreciation of AAP's own political appeal but also for situating its mode of political mobilisation within a larger political churning in the regional party space.

A comparison between Arvind Kejriwal's AAP and Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal (BJD) is ideal as these political parties are the clearest exemplars of a "post cleavage" turn (rather than a "post-ideological" turn) that has marked a new generation of regional parties. Some patterns of this post-cleavage paradigm can also be discerned in the political strategies of new regional parties such as the TRS (Telangana Rashtra Samithi which is now the Bharat Rashtra Samithi, or the BRS) and the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), even as their continued organisational till towards a dominant farming caste (Velamas and Reddys, respectively) make them more ambiguous case studies. What is the basic ideological framework of post-cleavage parties such as the BJD and AAP? This can be answered by dividing an ideological framework into three different dimensions (moral, distributive and discursive) and demonstrating what sets the BJD and AAP apart on all of these dimensions.

The moral and distributive dimension

Both AAP and the BJD skew towards a certain conception of representative democracy, where elections are viewed primarily as a mechanism to ensure popular accountability over government functioning rather than as a mechanism to ensure the fair representation of group interests in the democratic process. To be sure, the logic of political representation never really took root in Odisha or Delhi, given the historical entrenchment of urban middle-class interests and the weak politicisation of caste identity in both the States. Odisha is one of the few major States where the political elite has largely remained disconnected from the countryside, anchored as



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The grounding of AAP's aggregative politics within a clear ideological framework, for example, is crucial for a sharper appreciation of its appeal and an understanding of its mode of mobilisation within the regional party space

it is among the upper castes and professional middle classes of the coastal belt. The historical dominance of mining over agriculture in the State's developmental trajectory shifted the balance of power from a rural aristocracy to an urban aristocracy that comprised upper caste (largely Brahman-Karan) bureaucrats and industrialists (Mohanty 1990). Meanwhile, the appropriation of upwardly-mobile middle-caste Khandayat farmers into the larger Karan fold defused the possibility of any subsequent politicisation of rural caste identity. Similarly, the cleavages of caste are not as politicised in Delhi as in its neighbouring States because of its history as a bureaucrat-run Union Territory which was only granted partial statehood in 1993.

This yawning representational deficit combined with a more intense form of crony-capitalism in the post-liberalisation decades, led to widespread cynicism about institutional politics in both the States. The frustration with a malfunctioning local-level bureaucracy became interlocked with anger at high-profile corruption scandals. The consequent centre-staging of an anti-corruption discourse reinforced the need for a strongman leader who could put a lid on corruption and prevent the leakage of public resources into the hands of a small, well-networked elite. It is worth quoting a passage from James Manor's 2015 study on the dominance of the BJD in Odisha: "What about corruption? An oft-heard narrative in Odisha provides this answer: 'a clean Chief Minister who is also a stern disciplinarian has tidied the system up (a) by centralising and thus depriving subordinates of influence to sell, and (b) by punishing those who are caught profiteering'".

In his 1965 study of the Congress party in Uttar Pradesh, Paul Brass had commended the "integrative function" of traditional Congress factionalism. "Factional conflict also broadens the base of participation within the party as each faction competes for wider group support...by drawing in new caste and religious groups," Brass wrote. Yet, the Congress factions in Odisha (a State where Dalits and tribals form around 40% of the population) not only remained insular, as political scientist Ramashray Roy (1998) has explained, but also devolved into a chaotic scramble for tickets and the spoils of power. This kind of factionalism only reinforced perceptions of a corrupt, feckless regime.

In contrast, the BJD under Mr. Patnaik kept the party organisation deliberately weak. The aggregative populism of parties such as the BJD and AAP is acutely aware of the inevitable clashes between caste/community or interest-based groups that saddle party organisations. Instead, they try to forge "umbrella coalitions" from above, through their broad-based, programmatic

welfare-oriented leadership. The BJD's patronage strategy, for instance, involved buying off local elites and cultivating the Odiya media, without allowing for an independent centre of power to emerge in the organisation. Meanwhile, the high-rent economy of both States has been leveraged into the creation of a few marquee welfare schemes, or some grand infrastructure projects, carried out through a centralised bureaucratic apparatus. Moreover, these universal schemes have been exclusively linked to the personality of an 'honest' Chief Minister, enabling both parties to evolve a powerful programmatic appeal spanning across communities.

The discursive dimension

The aggregative thrust of these post-cleavage parties also extends to the articulation of a broad-based regional identity that can include everyone within its ambit. A strident linguistic identity, even in a relatively less heterogeneous State, can exclude large groups of people. One can recall the uneasy relationship between the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam and Dalits or the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) with tribal groups such as Bodos and Mishings.

In States which are more sociologically and geographically diverse, such as Odisha and Delhi, a political strategy centred on a narrowly defined regional identity is even more fraught with risks. While the BJD's Odisha model lays emphasis on social harmony more than progressivism/secularism, Chief Minister Patnaik has periodically reiterated the necessity of an inclusive Odiya identity for the progress of the State. The association of social strife with an 'anti-developmental agenda' has helped the party to keep right-wing forces at bay. The BJD has made steady incursions into Dalit and tribal groups since the riots in Kandhamal in 2008, when it broke off its alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). The BJP, meanwhile, has flailed in finding a coherent Hindutva narrative. The Odiya ethnic landscape is complex: for instance, the violence in Kandhamal can be seen as both "Hindu versus Christian" as well as "Tribal versus Dalit" violence. The overlapping social identities do not easily lend themselves to a communalised grand narrative as much to an overarching developmental model – the 'Delhi model' or the 'Odisha model' where aspiration replaces identity.

To be sure, this combination of a strong Chief Minister/centralised administration and a weak party machinery is not an exclusive feature to these two parties. Nevertheless, the ideological grounding given by AAP and the BJD to their politics makes them good exemplars of the post-cleavage turn in Indian State politics.

Type of Politics

Type of Politics

1. Cleavage politics (the differential mobilisation of competing social groups) = Exclusionary
2. Aggregative politics (the construction of a dominant coalition spanning across social groups). = Inclusive/GG

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Analysis

The article divides ideology into three dimensions (moral, distributive, and discursive) and compares the AAP with the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) to demonstrate that both parties skew towards a certain conception of representative democracy where elections are primarily a mechanism for popular accountability over government functioning, rather than for the representation of group interests. The article also argues that the rise of the AAP and BJD represents a "post-cleavage" turn in Indian politics, marking a new generation of regional parties that operate on different ideological dimensions than the traditional cleavage-based parties.

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10. PSUs

✚ The status and proceeds of disinvestment #TheHindu

Context	<p>In the Union Budget for 2023-24, the government has set a disinvestment target of ₹51,000 crore, down nearly 21% from the budget estimate for the current year and just ₹1,000 crore more than the revised estimate. It is also the lowest target in seven years. Moreover, the Centre has not met the disinvestment target for 2022-23 so far, having realised ₹31,106 crore to date, of which, ₹20,516 crore or close to a third of the budgeted estimate came from the IPO of 3.5% of its shares in the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).</p>
What is disinvestment?	<p>Disinvestment or divestment, in this context, is when the government sells its assets or a subsidiary, such as a Central or State public sector enterprise. Minority disinvestment, majority disinvestment, and complete privatisation are the three main approaches to disinvestment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ On fruition of minority disinvestment, the government retains a majority in the company, typically greater than 51%, thus ensuring management control. ➤ In the case of majority divestment, the government hands over control to the acquiring entity but retains

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	<p>some stake</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ s in complete privatisation, 100% control of the company is passed on to the buyer.
<p>How has disinvestment fared?</p>	<p>Different central governments in the past 30 years have been able to meet annual disinvestment targets only six times.</p> <p>The current BJP-led NDA government has met and even overachieved its disinvestment targets twice since coming to power in 2014.</p> <p>In 2017-18, the government earned disinvestment receipts of over ₹1 lakh crore against a target of ₹72,500 crore, and in 2018-19, it earned ₹94,700 crore against a target of ₹80,000 crore.</p> <p>PRS Legislative Research points out that in recent years, in cases of disinvestment where the government sold more than 51% of its shareholding in Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs), along with a transfer of management control, its stake was sold to another public sector enterprise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Case in point, when the Centre exceeded its target in 2017-18, it earned ₹36,915 crore by selling Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC). ➤ Similarly, in 2018-19, REC

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Limited was sold to the state-owned Power Finance Corporation Limited, through which the government raised ₹14,500 crore.

- In 2021-22, when Air India was added to the Tata group, the Centre missed its high disinvestment target of ₹1.75 lakh crore by a significant margin, raising just ₹13,534 crore in disinvestment proceeds.

In the current year, a third of its budget estimate came from the delayed LIC IPO, which would have happened in the previous year if not for market volatility.

The sale of the 52.8% stake in Bharat Petroleum (BPCL) had to be called off in mid-2022 because almost all the bidders had withdrawn.

The strategic sale of Central Electronics was also shelved due to lapses in the bidding process and the Pawan Hans stake-sale did not take off as well.

While the Neelachal Ispat Nigam Ltd. (NINL) was sold to a steel entity of the Tata group, no sale proceeds accrued to the Centre's exchequer as it held no equity in the company.

With ₹31,106 crore in the exchequer as disinvestment proceeds so far, and less than two months remaining in the

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	current fiscal year, the government is likely to miss its disinvestment target.
Which CPSEs are likely to see disinvestment?	<p>The Centre is not going to add new companies to the list of CPSEs to be divested in 2023-24 and the aspirational divestments of two public sector banks and one general insurance firm, announced in the Budget two years ago, will also not be a part of the plan. According to DIPAM, the government has decided to stick to the already-announced and planned privatisation of state-owned companies. Incidentally, the disinvestments of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, SCI, and ConCor had been approved by the government in 2019 but have not gone through yet. Observers point out that disinvestment should ideally be driven by the long-term vision of the government and not by the need to raise revenues. However, of late, the government's reliance on disinvestment proceeds to bridge the gap in the Budget has been increasing. It had introduced a new disinvestment policy in 2021 to maintain 'bare minimum' presence in strategic sectors like atomic energy, defence etc., and exit non-strategic sector enterprises.</p>

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11. UNION GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION

✚ Discipline and Discussion

#TheHindu

Discipline, discussion

Parliament is the forum where the government is answerable to the people

In Monday, Rajya Sabha Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar directed the Privileges Committee, headed by Deputy Chairman and JD(U) MP Harivansh, to investigate the "disorderly conduct" by 12 Opposition MPs that had led to multiple adjournments during the first leg of the Budget session. All through Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 85-minute address, the Opposition kept raising slogans, which Sansad TV that does the live telecast of the proceedings blacked out – the camera did not pan towards the Opposition benches. Earlier, acting on a complaint filed by a BJP MP, Mr. Dhankhar suspended Congress MP Rajani Patil for allegedly recording the proceedings on her mobile phone. The Congress cried foul that due procedure had not been followed and that she had not been served a notice giving her a chance to explain her position. Mr. Dhankhar interjected the speech of Congress president and Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge's 88-minute speech during the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address several times. The Opposition has protested the Chair's repeated direction to "authenticate" remarks made during speeches. Mr. Kharge has pointed out that "it would be [an] inversion of the system of government if the opposition members are expected to carry out complete investigation, gather evidence and then raise the matter on the floor of the House".

Six portions of Mr. Kharge's speech were expunged from the Rajya Sabha records, while Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Lok Sabha speech got 18 cuts. Parliament is the platform where the Opposition has the responsibility to ask questions of the government, which the Council of Ministers has the responsibility to answer. There are parliamentary rules and norms that have evolved over time to achieve this objective. It will be a travesty of parliamentary democracy if the Opposition is penalised for seeking accountability from the government, which in turn is allowed to hide behind rules and obfuscate the issue. It is the government that is in custody of all the information, over which queries are raised in Parliament. The authenticity, or the lack of it, of any assumption that an MP may express in the House must be clarified by the government, which is its duty. It is a strange situation that the government has not responded to the serious allegations that it faces of protecting private business interests at the cost of public interest, while those who are raising the questions face suspension in the name of discipline. Parliamentary discipline must ensure that discussions take place, and the government provides the answers.

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Defamation v/s Accountability

#TheHindu

House rules and the weapon of expunction

The expunction of portions of the speeches made by some Opposition politicians in Parliament recently is an issue that has sparked off a debate on an action taken by the Speaker (in the speech by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi), and the Chairman of the Rajya Sabha (in the case of the speech made by Congress President and Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge). Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Kharge were both speaking on the Motion of Thanks to the President of India for her address to the Members of Parliament of both Houses. This is customary practice although the Constitution does not provide for any such motion, except direct that each House shall discuss the matters contained in the address. This is a practice adopted from the British Parliament.

When such a motion is discussed, MPs are generally permitted to speak on anything under the sun. It is an occasion to point out lapses on the government's part and discuss the gamut of issues that concern the governance of the country. Speeches are generally political and the Chair never insists on relevance. Since the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to Parliament, MPs have the right to critically scrutinise the performance of the government. Accountability to Parliament requires the government to respond adequately to the questions raised by MPs in the debate. Under the Rules of the House, it is the Prime Minister who replies to the debate in both Houses.

The rules that are in place

Article 105 of the Constitution confers on members, freedom of speech in the House and immunity from interference by the court for anything said in the House. Thus, freedom of speech in the House is the most important privilege of a Member of Parliament which is subject only to the other provisions of the Constitution relating to the running of the House and the House Rules. Rule 380 of the Rules of procedure of the Lok Sabha and Rule 261 of the Rules of the Rajya Sabha give the power to the presiding officers of these Houses to expunge any words used in the debate which are defamatory, unparliamentary, undignified or indecent. Once expunged they do not remain on record and if anyone publishes them thereafter, they will be liable for breach of privilege of the House.

There are also occasions when an MP may,



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In a House where freedom of speech is the most important privilege of a Member of Parliament, establishing defamatory or incriminatory statements as opposed to critical comments, which an MP has the right to make, is important

during his speech, make an allegation against a fellow MP or an outsider. Rule 353 of the Lok Sabha regulates the procedure in that regard. Under this Rule, the MP is required to give "adequate advance notice" to the Speaker as well as the Minister concerned.

It may be noted here that the Rule does not prohibit the making of any allegation. The only requirement is advance notice, on receipt of which the Minister concerned will conduct an inquiry into the allegation and come up with the facts when the MP makes the allegation in the House. In this case, it may be noted that the allegation which necessitates advance notice, etc. is of a defamatory or incriminatory nature. It means that if the allegation is neither defamatory nor incriminatory, the above rule would have no application.

The rule does not obviously apply to an allegation against a Minister in the government. Since the Council of Ministers is accountable to Parliament, the Members of the House have the right to question Ministers and make imputations against their conduct as Ministers. All that is a part of their duty to ensure the government's accountability to Parliament. Article 105 gives them the freedom to discharge their duty fearlessly.

Allegations and Speaker rulings

However, a Member of Parliament needs to follow a certain procedure while making an allegation against a Minister. Such a procedure has been laid down by Speakers in the past. Making an allegation against a Minister or the Prime Minister is considered to be a serious matter; therefore, the presiding officers have carefully laid down a stipulation that the MP who makes an imputation against a Minister of the government should be sure about the factual basis of the allegation, and that he must take responsibility for it. If the MP complies with this stipulation, then the allegation will be allowed to remain on record. There have been many instances in the Lok Sabha when MPs have made allegations against Ministers. Here are two rulings made by the Speakers on such occasions.

On September 2, 1965 when Prakash Vir Shastri, MP, made personal allegations against Humayun Kabir, the then Minister for Education, the Minister refuted the allegation but the MP reiterated his allegation and referred to press reports. In his ruling, the Speaker, Sardar Hukam

Singh, said, "I wish to inform all the Honourable members with great respect that a mere report in a newspaper about anything does not give you the privilege to raise it in the House. I know that normally the source of information available to members is newspapers. But that is not a sufficient basis for a member to make an allegation against a Minister, member or other dignitaries. It is necessary to probe it further and satisfy oneself about it... Even if the allegation is proved wrong, it will[,] after all, affect the reputation of the person."

On December 21 1981 in the Lok Sabha, Bapusaheb Parulekar, MP, made a reference to an allegation published in the *Sunday* (a weekly) against the then Railway Minister, Kedar Pande, and his family members in connection with permanent railway card passes. The Deputy Speaker, G. Lakshmanan, who was in the chair gave the following ruling: "The member should, before making an allegation in the House, satisfy himself after making enquiries that there is a basis for the allegation. The member should be prepared to accept the responsibility for the allegation and the member should be prepared to substantiate the allegation."

Issue of defamation

However, a careful reading of the Rules of the House would reveal that the axe of expunction can be wielded only when the allegations mentioned therein are of defamatory or incriminatory character. Under Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code (Second exception), any statement respecting the conduct of a public servant in the discharge of his public function or his character (so far as his character appears in that conduct) is not defamation. If such a statement is made in the House against a Minister who is a public servant, it does not come within the 'mischief' of Rule 353 or Rule 380.

Therefore, it does not afford an occasion for the presiding officers to expunge words in or portions of a speech on the ground that they are defamatory. It is thus clear that before the weapon of expunction is wielded, it needs to be ascertained whether the speech contains defamatory or incriminatory statements or only critical comments (which a Member of Parliament has the right to make). It also needs to be ensured that the freedom of speech enjoyed by the Members in the House is not needlessly curtailed.

1. **Article 105** of the Constitution confers on members, **freedom of speech**.

2. **Under Section 499 of the Indian Penal Code**, any statement with respect to the conduct of a public servant in the discharge of his public function or his character is not defamation. If such a statement is made in the House against a Minister who is a public servant, it does not come within the '**mischief**' of **Rule 353 or Rule 380**.

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On receipt of advance notice under Rule 353, the Minister concerned will **conduct an inquiry** into the allegation and come up with the facts. allegation which necessitates advance notice should be of a **defamatory or incriminatory nature**.



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12. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Urban Bias in Rural Development

#TheHindu

Note- Knowledge of this article will help you in GS3 PYQs on “Balanced Regional Development”

Turn off the tap of urban bias in rural development

The divide between the rural and the urban has grown due to an inherent urban bias among policymakers and institutions, including the government. This happens because groups in urban areas are able to effectively influence these institutions in their favour. Second, the spill-over from markets in urban areas is also limited to the rural areas that are closer to urban settlements. This is known as the spill-over effect where the development of rural areas is dependent on larger urban cores. Consequently, rural areas which are far away from the urban core not only suffer from a lack of development but also keep falling behind rural areas which are closer to the urban core. It is for this reason that the state must step in to correct the rural-urban disparity by having in place special and targeted measures to develop rural areas. The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched in August 2019, is one such project which aims to provide access to safe and adequate drinking water to all households in rural India by 2024.

Variations in Tamil Nadu

The provision of safe drinking water is an important non-food factor influencing health and nutrition. Besides enabling tap water access at the household level, it helps reduce the drudgery women and girl children have to face and ensures their safety as well. Ensuring the “availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all” is the sixth goal in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations to be achieved by 2030.

As it has been three years since its implementation at the all-India level, tracking its progress in Tamil Nadu is important; this analysis is specifically important as Tamil Nadu's progress was better than the other States during the first two quarters of 2022.

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The case of providing tap water connections in Tamil Nadu is an example of this bias

The data for this study have been sourced from the dashboards of the website of the JJM (October 14, 2022) for the period between August 2019 and October 2022. As there was no mention of the total number of households as of August 2019 (when the JJM started), the data for October 2022 data have been used as the base.

The district-level data reveal wider variations in providing tap water connections to rural households among districts. For instance, a significant proportion of rural households in Kanchipuram (100%), Ranipet (98.73%), Kanniyakumari (83.99%), Vellore (80.89%), and Tiruchirappalli (78.55%) districts have tap water. Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Thanjavur and Dindigul districts have also made significant progress, where more than one lakh rural households got tap water connections in this period.

However, progress in Dharmapuri, Kallakurichi, Nagapattinam, Ramanathapuram and Virudhunagar districts was not commensurate with progress in the others. In Dharmapuri and Kallakurichi districts, it was only 2,049 (from 15.77% to 16.37%) and 2,089 (from 42.26% to 42.95%) households, respectively, in the last three years. Ramanathapuram and Virudhunagar also added only around 9% in the last three years. Only 22.4% of 3,02,402 rural households in Ramanathapuram and 31.12% of 4,28,435 rural households in Virudhunagar had a tap water connection in October 2022. Most importantly, overall progress in Nagapattinam district was very low, reaching only 5.97% of households

Falling behind

The percentage of additional tap water connections in rural areas of a district provided by the government between 2019 and 2022 was found to be significantly associated with the

percentage of the urban population in the districts concerned. When it comes to the total population of Tamil Nadu, its urban share is 48.4% as compared to 31.2% of India (Census 2011); but districts with low urban population percentages are lagging in the implementation of the JJM. For instance, among the five low performing districts, four districts have an urban population below 31%.

Similarly, among the 10 low performing districts, eight have an urban population below 38%. Of course, there are notable exceptions too. This kind of relationship between urban and rural regions has been found in other places of the world as well.

Left to itself, this may exacerbate the rural-urban disparity across regions and districts. In the case of Tamil Nadu, even the provisioning of tap water connections by the government seems to be impacted by the persistence of this kind of urban bias in rural development. Hence, the government must take additional measures to prioritise the implementation of the JJM scheme in districts with a high rural population such as Sivaganga, Ramanathapuram, Virudhunagar, Dharmapuri, and Nagapattinam.

Otherwise, it is highly unlikely that the goal of reaching all rural households by 2024 or even 2030 will be reached if the State does not change its methods. The achievements in these districts will likely have a demonstration effect on other districts with a high rural population. This will not only help to correct urban bias but also meet the SDG goal with regard to tapping water connections by 2024. In addition to the data on tap water connections, the provision of additional details such as the volume of water being supplied per day to each household as well as its quality will help in understanding the rate of progress better.

Linkages

Group Model of Policy Formulation (Observe the fact that urban areas are able to effectively influence the institutions as compared to rural areas)

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<p>Reasons behind increasing urban rural disparity</p>	<p>Biased Policies: The disparity has increased due to bias policies made by government and institutions for urban areas.</p> <p>Spill-over effect: It refers to the development of rural areas which is dependent on larger urban areas.</p>
<p>Effects</p>	<p>Rural areas which are far away from the urban areas not only suffer from a lack of development but also keep falling behind rural areas which are closer to the urban areas.</p>
<p>Challenge for India</p>	<p>In India, urban bias in rural development is a significant challenge. Despite the fact that over two-thirds of the population live in rural areas, government policies and resources have historically been focused on urban areas. This has resulted in inadequate investment in rural infrastructure, including roads, electricity, and water supply. Rural areas also tend to have less access to education, healthcare, and other services compared to urban areas. The consequences of this urban bias in rural development in India are significant. Rural poverty rates are higher than urban poverty rates, and rural populations often experience lower levels of social and economic development. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and underdevelopment in rural areas, which can be difficult to break.</p>

<p>Case Study - Performance of JJM in Tamil Nadu</p>	<p>It was found that the progress of JJM was better in those districts that have better percentage of urban population and districts with low urban population percentages were lagging in the implementation of the JJM.</p> <p>Hence, it shows that urban rural bias exists even in accessing the basic facilities like tap water.</p>
<p>Way Forward</p>	<p>Addressing urban bias in rural development in India requires a concerted effort from the government to prioritize rural development, increase investment in rural infrastructure and services, and create policies and programs that specifically target the needs of rural populations. This will require a shift in mindset and policy orientation, as well as increased funding and resources directed towards rural areas.</p>

Gandhiji

- Gandhi was a prominent political and social thinker in India who emphasized the importance of rural development and self-reliance. He argued that rural development was essential for achieving social and economic equality and reducing the gap between urban and rural areas.

Amartya Sen

- he has argued that the neglect of rural areas in development policies and investments has contributed to persistent poverty and inequality in many parts of the world.

Albert
Hirschman

- Propounded the **theory of unbalanced growth** as a strategy of development to be used by the underdeveloped countries. This theory stresses on the need of investment in strategic sectors of the economy instead of all the sectors simultaneously. According to this theory the other sectors would automatically develop themselves through what is known as “linkages effect”.

PYQ 2019
150W 10M

- All weather rural connectivity scheme to even unconnected rural habitations has the potential to transform the rural economy. Do you agree? Justify.

PYQ 2018
250W 20M

- “Rural development programmes have failed to effectively address the problems of small and marginal farmers.” Analyse and give suggestions.

PYQ 2001
200W 30M

- “Despite the serious commitment on the part of the government, the benefits of the rural development programmes do not seem to reach the intended targets and they fail to serve fully the purpose for which they were intended.” Elucidate.

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 Rural Tourism
#TheHindu

India to showcase success in rural and archaeological tourism at G-20 meeting

The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

The Ladpura Khas village of Madhya Pradesh, Khonoma village of Nagaland and heritage sites like Dholavira will be showcased as success stories of rural and archaeological tourism by India during the first tourism working group meeting of the G-20 nations to be held at the Rann of Kutch.

Rural tourism and archaeological tourism will be the topics for two side events at the first tourism ministerial meeting of the G-20 from February 7 to 9 where India will highlight the most successful and innovative initiatives of these from various parts of India, Tourism Secretary Arvind Singh said on Friday. Ladpura Khas was nominated as the Best Rural Tourism Village by the UNWTO.



Responsible travel: A view of Nagaland's Khonoma village, which will be showcased as a model for ecotourism. FILE PHOTO

India will also present the innovative model of community based Astrotourism that involves rural homestays and community spaces that are completely run by villagers and provides travellers an integrated experience of stargazing along with cultural immersion in the Himalayas, while Nagaland's Khonoma Village will present the model of Ecotou-

rism Management Board that develops Rural Tourism Products and promotes responsible travel.

The success of developing many rural tourism products in and around Rann of Kutch will also be presented.

"The idea is to present rural tourism as a means of community empowerment and poverty alleviation," Mr. Singh said.

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13. URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

✚ Reigning over the capital, from above
#TheHindu

Reigning over the capital, from above

Even though it has been more than two months since the elections to the Delhi Municipal Corporation were held (December 4, 2022), the city still does not have a Mayor. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) won 134 of the 250 wards, and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), 104 wards. However, the election of the Mayor, which is normally carried out in the first session of a new Council, could not be held on three attempts – on January 6 and 24, and February 6 – as the house was adjourned following tumultuous exchanges between councillors from the BJP and AAP. The reason was that the presiding officer had allowed nominated members to vote in the election for the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Standing Committee of the Corporation.

The Lieutenant Governor (LG) of Delhi, V.K. Saxena, had nominated 10 members, often referred to as Aldermen, to the Municipal Corporation just before the first session. AAP members have contested the decision to grant voting rights to these LG-nominated members and have asked for the mayoral elections to be held in a court-monitored manner. In a petition filed by AAP Councillor Shelly Oberoi, a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court headed by the Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud on Monday orally observed that “nominated members cannot go for election” while scheduling the hearing of the case for Friday. The mayoral election will now be held after the top court hears the case.

The brouhaha over Delhi’s mayoral election reveals multiple issues. At one level, it exemplifies the increasing attempt of the Union government to take control over the administration of Delhi. At another, it also raises larger questions regarding how municipal corporations are controlled by higher levels of government.

The question of whether nominated members, or alderman, can vote is fairly straightforward. Section 3(b)(i) of the Delhi Municipal Corporation (DMC) Act, 1957, provides that 10 people who have “special knowledge or experience in municipal administration” are to be nominated to the Corporation, but the proviso clearly states that such nominated persons “shall not have the right to vote in the meetings of the Corporation.” Further, Article 243R(2)(a) of the Constitution, which was introduced by the 74th Amendment, provides that state legislation can include those with special knowledge on municipal administration to be represented in municipalities but such persons shall not have the right to vote.



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The political machinations at the Delhi Municipal Corporation are part of the Union government’s growing attempts to have a stranglehold on the city’s governance

Given such unambiguous constitutional and statutory provisions regarding the voting rights of nominated members, it is distressing to see the mayoral elections delayed on this ground. The real legal questions that are contentious in this context are whether the LG can nominate members independently, how persons having special knowledge in municipal administration are determined, and whether the LG’s choice of members can be subject to judicial review. Instead, it is the blatant disregard of the law that the top court must now review.

The larger picture

The political machinations at the Municipal Corporation are part of the Union government’s increasing attempts to gain a stranglehold over Delhi’s governance. The most brazen exhibition of such power was the passing of the Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi (Amendment) Act, 2021. While ostensibly made to “give effect to the interpretation” of the 2018 judgment of the Supreme Court that had affirmed the primacy of the elected government in Delhi, the amendment in reality nullifies the judgment by “clarifying” that the expression “Government” shall mean the LG.

The amendment further provided that on matters specified by the LG, the Council of Ministers must obtain the permission of the LG before taking any executive decision and also imposed restrictions on the inherent rule-making powers of the Legislative Assembly.

After defanging the Legislative Assembly and the Council of Ministers of Delhi, it is now the municipal administration that the Union seeks to control. In April 2022, Parliament amended the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act to merge the North, South, and East Delhi Municipal Corporations into a single corporation, effectively undoing the trifurcation of the Municipal Corporation carried out in 2011. However, while the trifurcation was effected through an amendment passed by the Delhi Legislative Assembly, the unification was initiated by the Union government and passed by Parliament, undercutting the Legislative Assembly. Though local governments are a state subject under the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution, the Union government used its plenary powers under Article 239AA of the Constitution to pass this law. Now, the attempt is to control the unified Municipal Corporation by manufacturing a majority through nominated members.

The logjam in municipal administration in Delhi also raises larger questions about who has

the authority to decide how the city is governed. The issue is not merely of the Union government trying to control the Municipal and State governments in Delhi, but of higher levels of government exercising authority over lower levels. In fact, it is the State government that mostly has a tight rein over municipal governments across India. Thirty years after the passing of the 73rd and 74th Amendments that sought to make panchayats and municipalities function as “institutions of self-government”, local governments tend to function as administrative vessels of the State government, and not as an independent level of government.

A weakening

Union and State governments stifle the authority of municipal governments in multiple ways. While the 74th Amendment envisaged States to devolve a set of 18 functions to municipal governments, many of these functions continue to be exercised by state government-controlled parastatal agencies such as development authorities. The executive powers of the municipality are often vested with the State government-appointed commissioners, rendering the Mayor to a ceremonial role. Most crucially, municipalities are vested with very few revenue generating powers, keeping them reliant on grants and loans from the State and Union governments. More recently, national-level urban programmes such as the Jawaharlar Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) and the Smart Cities Mission have given the Union government a larger role in driving urban development and governance.

As local governments get weakened in the midst of an overall centralising trend in Indian polity, there needs to be more conversation about what authority each level of government should exercise. While local autonomy is crucial, higher levels of government can also have a legitimate role in local issues – to ensure regional coordination, reduce spatial inequality, or manage economic and environmental externalities, for example. However, the reasons why Union or State governments interfere in local governance is often not because of such discernable objectives but are driven by the desire to accumulate political and economic power or for short-term electoral advantage. While it is important to acknowledge and understand the realpolitik considerations driving the powers of the municipality, we should also not ignore the fundamental values of local democracy that underpin municipal authority.

SC Judgement

Recently, The Supreme Court said the Constitution does not allow nominated members of a municipality the right to vote for selecting the post of mayor.

Aldermen

The term Alderman refers to a member of a city council or municipal body; however, their

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	<p>specific roles and responsibilities differ according to the context. Under the Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, the Administrator can nominate 10 individuals over the age of 25 to the Corporation. These aldermen are expected to have special knowledge or experience in the municipal administration and assist the House in taking decisions of public importance.</p>
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#Back2Basics

<p>Challenges with Mayor System</p>	<p>No real power: The mayor is merely a ceremonial authority, and executive decisions are carried out by the municipal commissioner appointed by the state government.</p> <p>Lack of clarity: 74th amendment did not prescribe the manner of election, tenure, or powers of the Mayors/Chairpersons of Urban Local Bodies.</p> <p>Non-uniformity in tenure: Their tenure is also not uniform. In different states, they have different tenures, even as low as just one year.</p> <p>Lack of harmony between the mayor and bureaucrats: The existing municipal governance structure turns the entire democratically elected councillor against the chief executive, a state-appointed bureaucrat which leads</p>
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	<p>to inefficiency.</p> <p>Lack of Political Will: State governments do not wish to delegate more authority to city-level institutions. Often, urban resources are transferred to rural areas in the name of development.</p>
<p>Solution – 2nd ARC recommendations</p>	<p>Direct election of Mayor with a fixed tenure of 5 years.</p> <p>Mayor should be the chief executive of a city or urban government, and the city government should have the power to appoint all officials including the commissioner.</p> <p>In municipal corporations and metropolitan cities, the mayor should appoint the mayor cabinet. The mayor should choose the cabinet members from the elected corporators.</p> <p>The cabinet will exercise executive authority on matters entrusted to them by the mayor under his overall direction and control.</p>
<p>Benefits of direct election of Mayor in india</p>	<p>1.Accountability: Directly elected mayors are accountable to the people who elected them, making them more responsive to the needs and concerns of their constituents.</p> <p>2.Better governance: Mayors with a direct mandate from the people are more likely to be able to exercise strong leadership and make tough decisions that benefit their cities.</p> <p>Stability: Directly elected mayors have a fixed term of office, which provides</p>

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	<p>stability and continuity in city governance.</p> <p>3.Increased public participation: Direct elections can increase public engagement and participation in the political process, encouraging citizens to become more involved in shaping the policies and priorities of their city.</p> <p>4.Effective management of resources: Directly elected mayors can help in better management of resources, budgets and funds as they can plan and execute development projects according to their priorities.</p> <p>5.Development and Growth: Directly elected mayors can prioritize the development and growth of their cities as they have more authority and autonomy to plan and implement developmental schemes and projects.</p>
<p>Demerits of direct election of Mayor in india</p>	<p>1.‘Presidentialisation’ of mayoral leadership will be paradoxical in a system based on collective decision-making.</p> <p>2.Polarization: Direct elections can lead to the politicization of local bodies, which may lead to polarization and divisions among communities.</p> <p>3.Reduce the role of the elected councillors: With the mayor being directly elected, it may become difficult to hold them accountable for the functioning of the local body as they may not have to answer to the</p>

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	<p>elected representatives of the local body.</p> <p>4. Centralization of power: Direct election of Mayors can lead to the centralization of power in the hands of the Mayor, which may lead to the neglect of the interests of the local communities and elected representatives.</p> <p>5. Costly elections: Direct elections can be more expensive than indirect elections, as the election commission would have to conduct separate elections for the Mayor, which would lead to an additional financial burden on the government.</p> <p>6. Political interference: Direct elections can also lead to political interference in the functioning of the local body, as political parties may try to influence the elections to gain control over the local body.</p>
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14. DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION

Case Study #TheHindu

PAWAN KADYAN, DM & COLLECTOR, COOCH BEHAR | AWARD CATEGORY: SWACCHATA

In this Bengal district, solid, plastic waste management now a people's movement

SANTANU CHOWDHURY
SAHEBGANJ (COOCH BEHAR),
FEBRUARY 6

WORKERS HAVE assembled at a solid waste management (SWM) unit at the Bara Sakdal gram panchayat near the India-Bangladesh border in Cooch Behar district, about 750 km from Kolkata, to take out vans for waste collection from households.

The waste collected inside the SWM unit is used to make vermicompost or organic fertiliser, which is sold to the locals.

"The idea behind the move is to make SWM units self-sufficient. The collected waste is segregated into degradable and non-degradable (non-biodegradable) portions. The degradable portion is used to make organic fertilisers. The vermicompost is sold for Rs 10 to 12 per kg. Women from various self-help groups (SHGs) are employed as community facilitators to create awareness regarding waste management," said Rashmidipta Biswas, the Dinhat-II Block Development Officer (BDO).

Local resident Sangita Roy has been working as a community facilitator in the gram panchayat since the last few years. Every day at dawn, she keeps a vigil and blows a whistle if she spots anyone going to defecate in the open. "Despite having a toilet in their home, some people continue to defecate in the fields. We have to keep a watch on them. Bringing about a behavioural change in the people

is our prime task. Slowly the people realised the benefits of having a toilet inside their home. We too started seeing a positive outcome of our work," said Roy.

In 2017, Cooch Behar achieved the distinction of becoming the first open defecation-free (ODF) district in north Bengal. In 2020, the central government bestowed the Swachh Bharat Mission National Award (Grameen) 2020 upon Cooch Behar district.

In an attempt to sustain the momentum and ensure ODF behaviour among its people, the district administration started the Mission Nirmal Cooch Behar initiative the same year. The goal was to build on the ODF status, and develop solid and liquid waste management infrastructure for safe disposal of solid and liquid waste in villages.

Cooch Behar District Magistrate Pawan Kadyan said, "Mission Nirmal Cooch Behar has now moved on to the second phase. The focus is on improving solid waste management, starting the practice of plastic waste management (PWM) in rural ar-



Pawan Kadyan. Partha Paul

... eas and doing liquid waste grey-water management. We have built more than 1,000 community sanitary complexes (CSCs) across the district in a year. We have covered all marketplaces, public places, gram panchayats and rural areas. We have also focused on menstrual health management by providing biodegradable sanitary napkins, under the brand name Bandhabi, that are made by local SHGs and given to students in schools."

Kadyan is among the 19 winners of The Indian Express Excellence in Governance Awards for 2020 and 2021. The biennial awards celebrate the finest work

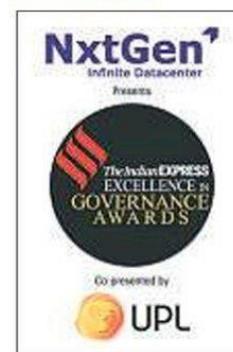
done by District Magistrates, women and men considered the **foot soldiers of governance** as they script change that touches the lives of countless people across the country. Kadyan won in the Swachhata category.

According to him, 16 SWM units have been set up and 18 others are under execution.

"We are the first district to set up a PWM unit in the state. Another PWM unit is under construction and three others are in the pipeline. Producing vermicompost is another component of solid waste management," said Kadyan.

When it comes to liquid waste

management, a large number of soak pits and covered drains have been constructed in rural areas and public places throughout the district after a thorough assessment. Concrete platforms have been constructed for all tube wells accompanied by soak pits. Planned measures have also been taken for greywater management with the help of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) and the 15th Finance Commission grants.



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