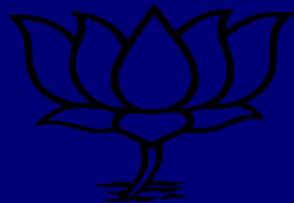


UPA Dinner

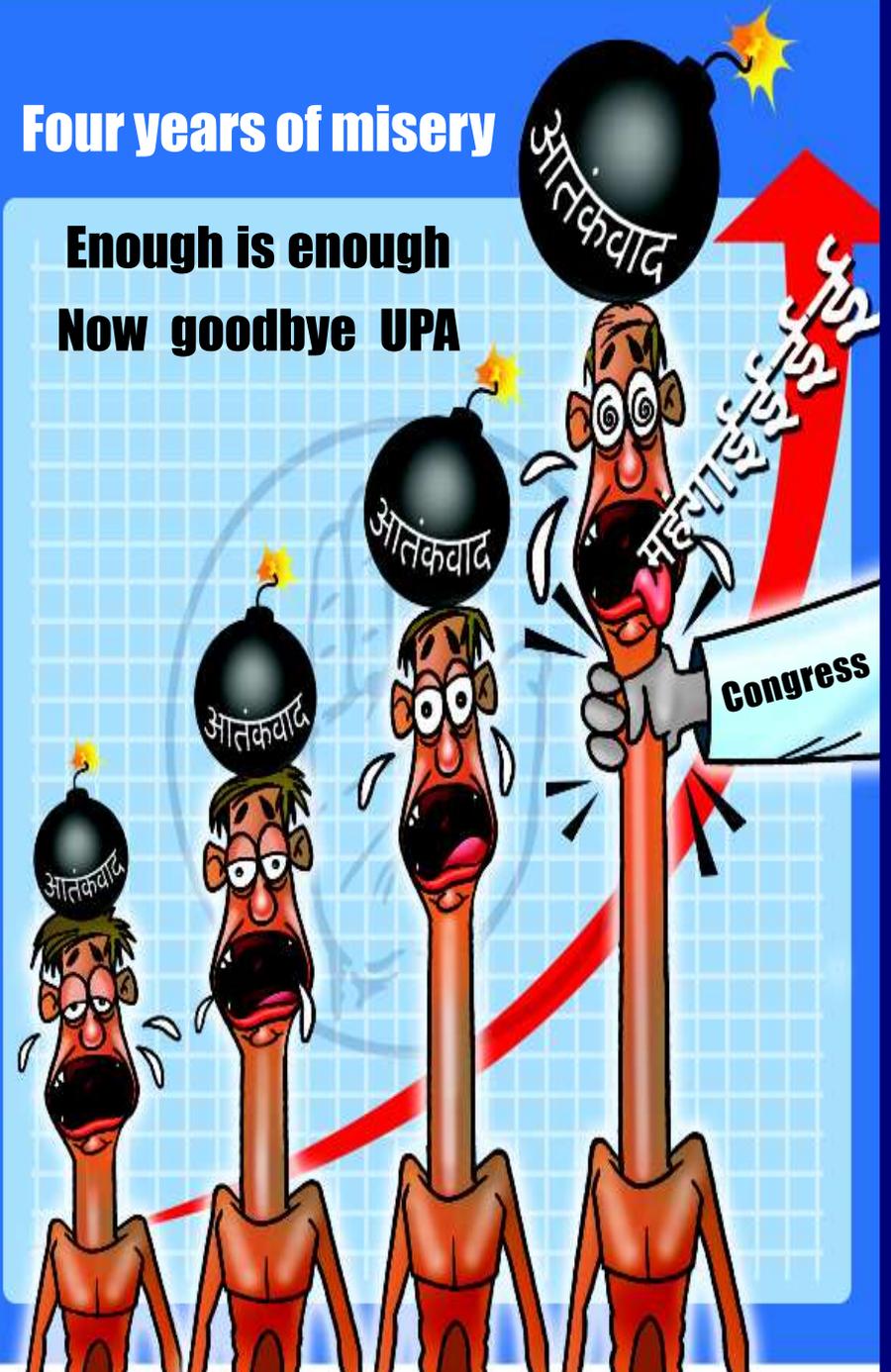


Bharatiya Janata Party

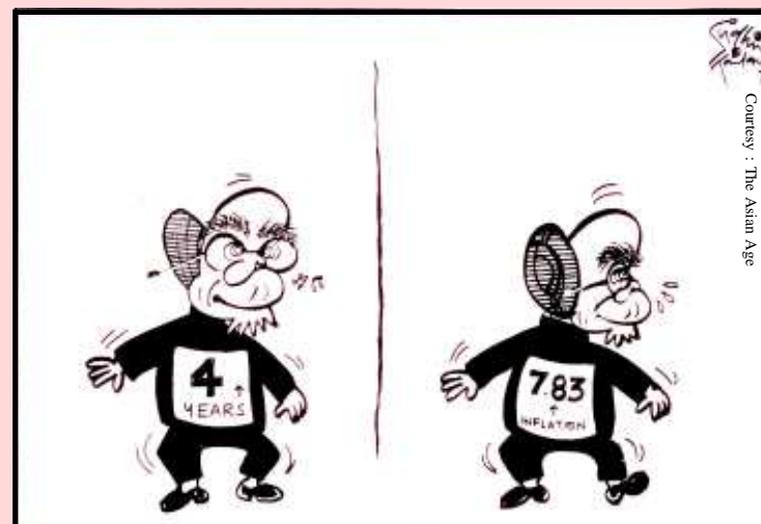
11, Ashok Road, New Delhi-110001

Four years of misery

**Enough is enough
Now goodbye UPA**



Comparative prices during NDA and UPA rule		
Commodities	Price (Per kg, NDA, May ,2004)	Price(Per kg UPA, May, 2008)
Wheat	9	14-16
Flour	10	18-20
Maida	12	17-20
Bread	8	15
Sugar	14	20-25
Tea	80	150-180
Mustard oil	40	80-85
Dalda Ghee	40	80-85
Moong s(dal)	24	40-44
Arahar (dal)	26	45-48
Musoor (dal)	22	50-55
Chana(dal)	25	44-46
Rajma	28	50-55
Gur	14	20
Beson	20	48
Milk	14	24
Paneer	62	120-140
Ghee (Desi)	130	175-225
Kerosen oil	18	25-30
L.P.G	244	295
Petrol	33.15	47.7
Diesel	22.50	32.50
Cement	125	240
Steel	2300/Ton	4400/Ton
Brick	1800/1000	2500/1000
Rice	10	22-28
Source: Newspaper reports		



Courtesy : The Asian Age

From the Publisher

Bharatiya Janata Party has always stood by its principles and policies. Its motivation has always been the promotion of the national interest and preservation of the unity and integrity of the country at all costs. It has never wavered on its ideology and not the least for temporary political or electoral gains.

BJP has always respected the will of the people. It has performed its role as a constructive and vigilant opposition functioning as the watchdog of the nation's interests. Whenever in many States or at the Centre in 1998 the people gave their mandate to form a government whether on its own strength or in alliance, it has discharged its duties and functions with a remarkable sense of commitment. People do remember and compare the work and achievements of our governments for short durations with those of Congress and others for long. Our achievements outshine all others.

For the past four years, in close cooperation from alliance partners in NDA, BJP has risen to the occasion to perform the role of an efficient and effective opposition. It has raised issues within Parliament and outside that had been agitating the minds of the common masses, be it the threat to country's security from outside, internal security, price rise, minority appeasement, threat to life and property of people, matters concerning women, children, students, youth, traders, working class and farmers.

In the last week of May this year, UPA completes four years of its tenure. It hardly has anything to feel proud of. If unprecedented rise in prices is an achievement in which the aam aadmi's life has become miserable as it never was before. If terrorists striking at will anywhere in the country and none is hauled up and punished for the crime of killing hundreds of innocent men, women and children is an achievement. If UPA sitting judgement over the Supreme Court verdict sentencing Parliament attack case prime accused Afzal Guru is an achievement. If appeasement of minorities at the cost of others and sowing the seeds of another partition is an achievement, UPA certainly has scored perfect 10. If it is not, then for all intents and purposes UPA is a total failure on every front, gasping for last breath..

In the present booklet, we are only presenting a collage of the UPA's failures. It is not a collection of allegations; it is a compilation of facts as unfolded during the past four years. We are presenting the booklet for the information of our benign readers to help them make up their mind where does UPA stand in the eyes of the people.

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Bharatiya Janata Party
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May 2008

Contents

1.	The year of UPA's countdown	1
2.	A series of successive defeats	11
3.	Taming Constitution to make it dance to UPA tunes	18
4.	Where Prime Minister doesn't matter	20
5.	The worst communal alliance	22
6.	Hurting Hindu sentiments on Ram Sethu	34
7.	In Kashmir confusion worst confounded	37
8.	When it's China, UPA on its knees	46
9.	Too many cooks (economists) spoil the broth (economy)	54
10.	Betrayal of farmers	65
11.	Centre - State relations Bad to worse	71
12.	Foreign policy in shambles	75
13.	It is internal insecurity	81
14.	Basketful of Constitutional snubs	91
15.	Scandals and scams UPA's Roll of Honour	93
16.	Communists - the legendry Shakunis of India	102
17.	Failures miscellany	112
18.	In conclusion	118

'The year of UPA's Countdown'

The Congress-led United Progressive Alliance, supported from outside by the Left parties, completes four years of its life and enters the fifth and final "good-bye" year in the fourth week of May, 2008.

The greatest achievement - more so, the strangest part - of its existence is that it has succeeded in surviving and lingering on for so long. The secret of its life lies in the absence of any qualms of conscience to stoop to any low to compromise on everything just to keep itself in power. It had no hesitation to ignore the national interests, not once, numerous times.

UPA has given, in the words of Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Shri Lal Krishna Advani, the weakest ever government and the prime minister the country ever had since independence.

That is why this UPA government has not performed; it has just drifted.

UPA is the result of a miracle that gave Congress 145 seats, just 7 more than the Bharatiya Janata Party in the 2004 elections to Parliament. That conferred it the right to claim to be the single largest party and therefore, to prefer the first claim to be invited to form a government.

That provided it an excuse to cobble up an alliance with as divergent partners as Samajwadi Party, Rashtriya Janata Dal, Bahujan Samaj Party, Nationalist Congress Party, Telengana Rashtriya Samiti, Lok Janashakti Party, Janata Dal (Secular) and the like against whom it had fought a fierce electoral battle just a week back, calling each other names. There was no love lost between these parties; there was no commonalty of principles and purpose between

these parties except their desperate lust for power -- a mandate which the people had denied to both the Congress and these parties. They were able to get what they could never dream. With as less as 6 MPs, with presence in just once State or part of the country, these splinter groups and parties came to occupy the posts of ministers at the Centre. Added to all that was the Left parties who extended their support to this government from outside.

UPA pride -- galaxy of tainted ministers

UPA is not an alliance of high principles but of unhealthy compromises. It lacks a moral ground. It is the illegitimate child of a marriage of convenience to grab political power denied to these very parties by the electorate during elections to Lok Sabha. It lacks commitment to principles, canons of morality, healthy traditions and precedents. That explains why Manmohan government was never strong and healthy but was struck with polio from the day one. It desecrated the august office of the Union Cabinet with such illustrious individuals who made history by standing as accused in courts facing criminal charges as heinous as murder, dacoity, rape, attempt to murder, extortion, mafia links, corruption, amassing wealth beyond known sources of income, and the like. Prime Minister appears to be presiding over a government composed of persons accused of criminal and antisocial activities who should otherwise have been cooling their heels in jails with their brethren facing similar charges. Congress can go to any length to stick to power at all costs under all circumstances by hook or crook.

A saga of failures

4 years of UPA is a saga of failures. It has taken the country downhill in almost every spheres of activity -- political, administrative, economic, home, internal security and foreign affairs.

The worst part is that it has failed to honour most of the prominent pledges made to the people in the Congress election manifesto and in the post election conglomeration it found after the elections. The National Common Minimum Programme (CMP) continues to be a daydream for the *aam admi*.

It is not only the common man, even the UPA alliance partners and the left parties have every now and then been blaming the UPA with not implementing the provisions of the CMP. They even accused the Congress of not following to the coalition dharma.

The UPA ended up into an opportunistic marriage of convenience between disparage political parties and leaders to enjoy

the honeymoon with power. There was no bond of moral values or principles but the only common bond of lust for power.

Coalition with no doors

The United Progressive Alliance is the house which has no doors. Everybody is allowed to access it and leave it any time at will. This has happened with the Samajwadi Party, Telangana Rashtriya Samiti, Janata Dal (Secular), MDMK, Ajit Singh's Rashtriya Lok Dal.

Who is in, who is out?

At the time of striking the alliance with TRS Congress had promised to carve out a separate state of Telangana out of the existing Andhra Pradesh. But once it won the election and got the support to form a government at the Centre, it ditched the people of Telangana. In 4 years it has yet to do anything concrete in this direction. UPA constituted a committee under the chairmanship of present Minister for External Affairs Shri Pranab Mukherji to look into the demand for Telangana state.

Not to speak of making any recommendation, the committee has remained inactive and has hardly met for more than once. That speaks volumes for its honesty towards promises made to the people.

Where is UPA, where not?

Equally difficult is to say where UPA exists and where not. In Maharashtra Congress and NCP are sharing power in the State but in Meghalaya NCP is in opposition to Congress and is sharing power with BJP. While NCP is in power in alliance with other parties including BJP. In Maharashtra although NCP and Congress have consummated a marriage of convenience at the Centre and the State, in Maharashtra itself both are fighting each other politically at the cost of the other. In the local bodies elections in Maharashtra both the parties fought against each other. When both lost they accused each other for the failure in the elections.

Enemies in West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura

Friends at the Centre

The Congress-led UPA and the Left parties are strange bed fellows. They share a common bed of power in Delhi but are enemies in the States of West Bengal, Kerala and Tripura. They are fighting each other in these states. Last year in Kerala left parties led LDF dethroned Congress in Kerala. In the elections to Tripura assembly held this year Congress failed to make a dent and the CPM won the elections once again.

In Maharashtra elections more than 3 years back Congress and NCP fought elections against each other with the latter pushing Congress to the 2nd opposition yet both colluded to form a government. In last year's local bodies elections BJP-Shiva Sena combined retained its supremacy in Mumbai and snatched power from UPA partners in many local bodies.

BJP-SAD won the elections to the post of Mayor in Chandigarh Municipal Corporation defeating Congress.

Who is the friend, who's the foe?

Equally trying is the task to keep a track of which UPA ally fought election in alliance and which in opposition to each other in different States.

The Congress had two alliances in a single year in Bihar, In February 2005 it allied with Shri Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) against Shri Laloo's Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD). In November elections same year, Congress jilted Shri Paswan and flirted with RJD this time. Interestingly, they all yet continue to be part of UPA at the Centre.

Lalu-Paswan public spat

Before the February '05 elections both Shri Laloo Prasad Yadav and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan had publicly hurled accusations against each other, with the latter calling Yadav as Chara chor and Shri Yadav calling Shri Paswan as the most corrupt politician. The former claimed that he had official records with him of Shri Paswan's sleeper scam when he was the Railway Minister and that Shri Paswan cannot escape punishment and would spend the rest of his life in jail. Since both were honourable members of Manmohan government they could not be expected to be so irresponsible as to hurl false accusations against each other. Public wanted to know the reality as to who was right and who was a liar. Both could not be right or wrong. Whoever was wrong, had no moral right to continue in the Cabinet.

A weak Prime Minister as Dr. Manmohan Singh is, he failed to exercise his moral authority to take action against which of the two was wrong. Instead he took the easy path to keep both in good humour to save his gaddi. He declared both Yadav and Paswan as the joint winners of this tug of corruption war.

In the elections held later in the State assemblies of West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry and Assam, the situation was still more confusing with many UPA partners fighting against each

other in these States.

An Ayaram-Gayaram Alliance

In Karnataka JD(S) and Congress have already parted company. It also proves that Congress is insincere towards its alliance partners and is only exploiting its allies to further its own political interests. That is why one after the other, they are leaving UPA.

Friendly arrows of accusations between RJD, LJP and Congress are a part of history. Yet, all of them continue to be part of the UPA family.

In the elections to Tamil Nadu assembly, although Congress and other UPA alliance partners contested the elections together, DMK which led the alliance there refused to recognize it as a UPA victory although both Prime Minister and Smt. Sonia Gandhi claimed it so. DMK called it its own individual win.

Further, DMK has so far refused to give Congress a representation in the Ministry although latter is desperate to get its pound of flesh in the ministry so that it can once again be in power, after three decades even if on the crutches provided by DMK. So far DMK has not obliged, although DMK has a sizeable share in UPA council of ministers at the Centre.

Congress and BSP do not see eye to eye with each other. BSP supremo and UP Chief Minister Shushri Mayawati is only exploiting the current political scenario for herself personally and for her organization to squeeze maximum benefit. She has got many of the criminal, income tax and inquiries against her dropped or compromised.

Love-hate relation with Mulayam

Since the inception of UPA Congress has been maintaining a love-hate relationship with Samajwadi Party led by Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav.

It is difficult to recall when they were in intimate political relationship and when they were fighting. Although on record the Congress was supporting the Mulayam government from outside, yet Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and heir apparent Rahul Gandhi lost no opportunity to dub this government as the most inefficient, corrupt and anti-people government. At the Centre the Samajwadi Party continued to support the UPA government. But outside they were enemies of each other. When only about 2-3 months were left for completion of the term of the present Vidhan Sabha Rahul Gandhi and Smt. Sonia Gandhi went all out to dismiss this government and

imposed President rule. The Congress also formally withdrew its support to Mulayam government and the Samajwadi reciprocated by withdrawing its support to the UPA government. But their designs were thwarted by the Election Commission announcing the schedule for elections to the Vidhan Sabha.

Even now after having continued to shoot occasionally arrows against each other, political infatuation between both seems to be warming up, thanks to Sushri Mayawati's BSP which is targeting both. Although both continue to deny an exchange of amorous glances yet people do realize that both the parties may not have announced their formal engagement they are continuously dating each other and going steady. When they will tie the political knot or seek separation from each other is difficult to say or predict.

A circus, not an alliance

UPA and the Communists are presenting a strange phenomenon of coalition politics in which the conflicts and contradictions outsmart the unanimity of thought and action. Every other day our news media flash out the report of one constituent or the other of alleging that the government is going astray from the provisions of the National Common Minimum Programme agreed to by them. The divergence of views is more prominent than the area of agreement. CPM has made known numerous times that it does not trust the Congress and nor does it consider the latter as its long-term political ally. The underlying message from the Marxists is that their support to UPA government is a matter of compulsion and convenience; it does not stem from any political conviction inspired by public interest.

That speaks volumes for the political ideology of Left parties, their convictions and their principles. They possess none; they display none. All that they have is a short-term strategy to promote their narrow selfish agenda and vested interests in the name of the common man, poor, farmers and working class.

It is not surprising that some people call the Manmohan government not an alliance but a circus which has many jokers. But even a circus has a ringmaster under whom different characters work in unison for a common cause of giving a good performance and entertainment to the audience. UPA lacks even this element. But this much is true that UPA does have some jokers in it.

When Congress failed to honour its promise to the Telangana people, in frustration, the TRS came out of the ministry both at the

Centre and State in Andhra owing to irreconcilable basic policy differences.

Later, the Congress challenged TRS Chief Shri Chander Shekhar Rao to quit his Lok Sabha seat and seek re-election on the issue. He accepted the challenge and resigned from Lok Sabha and won the Karimnagar seat once again with a thumping majority although Congress as a political party and as a party in power did everything to defeat the TRS which had declared that the result would be a referendum on the demand for a separate State of Telangana. Shri Rao recorded an impressive win by a margin of 2,01,582 votes his Congress rival who could get only 1,76,448 votes. Since BJP also stands for a separate Telangana State, it means that people's mandate for a separate, full-fledged State of Telangana is all the more overwhelming. Yet, Congress is not ready to concede this genuine demand of the people.

Disgusted over the Congress attitude of betrayal to the Telangana cause TRP MPs and 18 MLA resigned en bloc from Parliament and AP Vidhan Sabha, the result of the by-elections is expected to be out in the last week of May 2008 will indicate which way the wind is blowing.

Congress Crown Prince

The Congress 'crown prince' and heir apparent of the Congress President, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, whom the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, during one of his election meetings in UP, anointed as "the future of UP" proved it otherwise for the Congress Party. This "future of UP" Congress proved a disaster and damp squib. If he is the "future", the voters of UP have eclipsed it.

Till elections to UP Assembly, Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi and her son Rahul Gandhi never stepped out of their parliamentary constituencies during their tours of UP. According to reports, Shri Rahul had 106 roadshows which gave him a bagful of just 10 assembly seats for the Congress. He visited more than 140 assembly segments. The family trio of Smt. Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Vadara (she likes to be called like that instead of 'Gandhi') concentrated their might in their pocket boroughs of two Parliamentary constituencies of Rae Bareilly and Amethi and their collective charisma could give out a return of just six seats out of 10 (4 out of 5 in Rae Bareilly and 2 out of 5 in Amethi). The UP elections proved that the present Nehru-Gandhi family never had a charisma and, if it did have, it has now failed to click.

The much hyped election campaign by the Gandhi family trio of Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi supported by the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh proved in dismal flop with Congress strength in UP assembly getting reduced to 21 from its earlier (2002) strength of 25 and its vote percentage dwindling to 8 percent from 9 percent. More striking is the Congress failure in its home turf.

Rahul flops in Gujarat & Himachal

Shri Rahul Gandhi made his debut in Congress electioneering campaign in UP and later in Gujarat but the voter showed a thumb to Shri Rahul and gave Congress a good drubbing in the both states.

Similarly Shri Rahul Gandhi had his road show only in the district of Kullu of Himachal Pradesh and the response was such that for the first time in the history of HP Congress lost all the 3 assembly seats.

Sonia coterie splitting?

Human Resource Development Minister Shri Arjun Singh had so far been known as the leading member of the coterie closes to both Mrs. Sonia Gandhi and Shri Rahul Gandhi. But it seems the fissures are appearing in the kitchen cabinet and Shri Arjun Singh seems to be falling in the esteem of 10 Janpath. On the pattern of knocking at the door of 10 Janpath every now and then during the Narsimha Rao regime praying Mrs Sonia Gandhi to come forward to lead the Congress party and being the most ardent supporter in projecting Smt. Sonia Gandhi as the Prime Minister, he seems now to be getting tired and frustrated. When his unstinted sycophancy and loyalty to the 'family' failed to fetch him rewards in his nomination and Smt. Sonia Gandhi's pleasing eyes favoured Dr. Manmohan Singh overlooking him, he too seems to have floundered and felt slighted. He first went to suggest that Shri Rahul Gandhi should be made the Prime Minister, knowing fully well that the Congress had yet to formally announce under whose leadership the election would be fought. Moreover saying so clearly damaged the position of the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh himself. Shri Arjun Singh indirectly stated that Dr. Manmohan Singh has proved to be a failure and the Congress could not risk projecting him as the Prime Minister for the second term. But this put the Congress leadership in an embarrassing situation and had to react that it does not entertain 'sycophancy' and the post of the Prime Minister is not vacant. Despite the Congress party snub the campaign continues and recently Shri

Prakash Jaiswal, Minister of State for Home declared that the post of Prime Minister was too small for a high person like Rahul Gandhi.

People's Report Card faults UPA

'It is not just ignoring but violating people's mandate'

The performance of the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) Government has failed to fetch even the necessary 33 percent marks to get through in the third class. The People's Report Card after a thorough examination by high standards has given it only 30 per cent marks. Worse still is the comment in the People's Report Card that the Government "was not just ignoring but violating the mandate of the people that brought it to power."

Based on a survey conducted by 500 grassroots and development organisations across 20 States, the People's Report Card was released on May 25. This assessment comes two days after Prime Minister Manmohan Singh placed the UPA Government's 'Report to the People 2004-2007' in which he claimed that "the National Common Minimum Programme (NCMP) has been substantially implemented" while holding the belief that by the end of its tenure, the current dispensation "would have delivered more than we had promised."

The people's verdict titled 'Promises Are Not Enough!' is to the contrary as not even half the work the UPA took upon itself has been completed though the Government is well into the second half of its tenure. The Government has been given an aggregate of 30 per cent for its performance in education, health, employment, discrimination (on the basis of caste, gender and religion), decentralisation through panchayats, and peace and security.

Addressing a function to mark the release of the report, convenor of the 'Wada Na Todo Abhiyan' (do not break your promise campaign), Shri Amitabh Behar said: "Largely the people continue to be angry and discontent. It is evident that our insensitive government needs not only engagement but also agitational politics and street action to keep its promises."

Demanding that the commitments made in the NCMP be converted into visible action in a time-bound manner, the People's Report Card has made ten policy demands to end poverty and social exclusion. These demands include universal access to education though the adoption of the Right to Education Bill, 2005, with suggested amendments and allocation of 6 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product for education; universal access to the public health system by allocating 3 per cent of the GDP to the sector and effective

implementation of the National Rural Health Mission; and ensure the Right to Work by rigorously implementing the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act across the country with the involvement of elected local bodies.

Other demands are enactment of the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005, with suggested amendments and strengthening the implementation of the Land Reforms Acts; introduction and enactment of the Women's Reservation Bill; comprehensive central legislation on reservation in the private sector for Dalits and adivasis.

Like mom, like son

Like her earlier renunciation staged in 2004 Smt. Sonia Gandhi also wanted to bestow halo of tyag on her son Rahul also. She declared that she had wanted him to be Union Minister but Shri Rahul Gandhi had declined. This also shows who is calling the shots in the government. It is the prerogative of the Prime Minister to decide who should be a minister and who should not in his government. But Smt. Gandhi proved that it is not Dr. Manmohan Singh but she who is exercising her prerogative.



A series of successive electoral defeats

UPA may have succeeded in continuing to stick to power at the Centre despite many violent shakes, in States it continues to lose one State after the other.

In the elections to five State assemblies of West Bengal, Kerala, Assam, Tamil Nadu and Pondicherry, Congress received the worst drubbing at the hands of the electorate. Smt. Gandhi campaigned in every State but her 'renunciation' or so-called *tyag nautanki* failed to click and befool the people. The electorate saw through her game. Congress-led UDF was dethroned in Kerala and in Assam, Congress which had overwhelming majority in the last election was humbled and relegated to the position of the single largest party having to depend upon others against whom it fought elections to form a government. In West Bengal and Tamil Nadu, Congress was a loser as ever.

In Maharashtra elections earlier, Congress conceded the position of being the single largest party to its partner, the Nationalist Congress Party.

But in the Maharashtra local bodies elections, BJP-Shiv Sena combine snatched power from UPA partners in local bodies. It was able to win Mayoral elections at towns against towns by Congress and NCP.

BJP-SAD was able to win the post of Mayor in Chandigarh Municipal Corporation elections defeating the Congress.

UP Local Bodies Elections

Congress humbled, BJP upbeat

Till the results were out, the Congress was making tall claims to sweep the local bodies elections in Uttar Pradesh. But it was red-faced when actual results were out. BJP won 8 out of 12 mayoral elections. Congress had to content itself with just 3 and Samajwadi Party with one seat only. Congress could not save its honour even in the prestigious local bodies in Congress supremo Smt. Sonia

Gandhi's constituency of Rae Bareilly and Shri Rahul Gandhi's Amethi constituency.

The UPA drift downwards started much earlier. In February 2005 it failed to retain power in Bihar assembly elections. It staged a coup by misusing the office of Governor and indulged in political infant foeticide by dissolving the Bihar House which had no yet been officially constituted and the newly elected representatives of the people had not yet taken oath. The Supreme Court of India had, later, declared this action of the Union government on the advice of the Bihar Governor, Shri Buta Singh, as "unconstitutional".

In the midterm poll, the people of Bihar gave a befitting reply to the UPA intrigues and gave an absolute majority to the JD(U)-BJP alliance.

Punjab & Uttarakhand dethrone Congress

This was followed by elections in Punjab and Uttarakhand where Congress was in power with overwhelming majority. Most of the Congress ministers there were defeated. Punjab Congress President Shri Shamsher Singh Dullu too lost the poll. SAD-BJP alliance romped home to majority with 67 seats -- BJP bagging 19 out of 23 it contested.

In Uttarakhand, BJP threw out the Congress from power and gained absolute majority

Sonia snubbed in Gujarat

Despite doing all it could, Smt. Sonia Gandhi failed to bring luck to Congress. Despite having used derogatory language, such as "*maut ka saudagar*" during the election campaign, people humbled Congress in a big way and BJP lead by Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi won an honourable victory.

Himachal too kicks out Congress

In Himachal too, BJP dethroned Congress. It won a convincing win winning 41 seats in a 68-member house, just 4 seats short of two-thirds majority. This win also made a history because it was for the first time that BJP had scored majority on its own strength without alliance with any party.

Cong shown the door in Karnataka too

The childish gimmicks played by Shri Rahul Gandhi by launching upon his "discovery of India" voyage in Karnataka forests and staying with dalit families, as also the hectic campaign by Smt. Sonia Gandhi failed to do any trick for Congress fortunes. She and her hand-picked Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh did, on their

own, pat their backs for their 4-year rule Report Card on May 22, 2008, but just after three days on May 25 the people, particularly of Karnataka, which State was once the safest and the strongest Congress fort in the South, wrote UPA's real report card by throwing it out giving BJP near majority in the State assembly elections. Lotus bloomed in the South for the first time giving BJP the unique opportunity of having its own government on its own strength.

Karnataka marks the 11th successive loss by the Congress since 2004 when UPA assumed power in the country.

■

Sonia-Manmohan duo fails to inspire

Strange are the ways of Congress-led UPA. Its chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi and the handpicked Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, both fail to inspire the people. They fail to win people's hearts.

Sonia and PM

Not on speaking terms?

A person doesn't have to write to the other as long as he/she live in the same town and are on good terms with each others. Dr. Manmohan Singh and Smt. Sonia Gandhi live in Delhi, function in the same organisation and claim to be on the best of cordial terms. Then why should ever they write to each other? They can very well lift the phone and speak to each other. That is why the people felt startled when they read reports of Smt. Sonia Gandhi writing to Prime Minister on important issues, like FDI in retail trade and TFA. Prime Minister is the head of the Government and Smt. Sonia Gandhi heads the Congress organisation. It is but natural that both should keep in touch with each other on important policy matters. That she had to write occasional letters to Prime Minister instead of picking up the phone to speak to him made people wonder whether they are

not on speaking terms with each other!

Manmohan under Sonia

Smt. Sonia Gandhi is the supreme leader of the Congress under whom Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh is working. Union Minister Shri Sriprakash Jaiswal has said, "Sonia Gandhi is the National President of the Congress and PM Manmohan Singh being a Congress member, is functioning under the Congress Party chief".

PM and HM on two wavelengths

On February 16, 2008 the Union Home Minister, Shri Shivraj Patil, declared: "I don't think it (Maoist violence) as the biggest security challenge".

And recall what Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said less than two months back in December 2007: The Maoist and naxal violence is "the single greatest security challenge ever faced by our country". Is it not amusing as it is entertaining?

Congress-SP befooled people

In return people befooled both

It is a hard fact, though unbelievable, that on record Congress supported the Samajwadi Party (SP) in the State and in return, SP supported UPA government at the Centre. Both continued to enjoy the fruits of power in the State and at the Centre, but kept befooled the people with outward opposition to each other. Recall the language Smt. Sonia Gandhi and Shri Rahul Gandhi had been using against Shri Mulayam Singh and his government. But it was only at the fag-end of Mulayam government's tenure in January 2007 that Congress formally withdrew its support to this government after BJP had repeatedly been exposing this perfidy of Congress. SP withdrew support to UPA government after a month.

President's rule hype

In January-February 2007 Congress raised a great media hype about its intention to dismiss Mulayam government and impose President's rule. BJP too announced its support to UPA if it rid the people of Mulayam's jungle raj and said that it would vote for any resolution in this behalf in the Parliament. But Congress was neither sincere nor had the courage to do so.

In the elections that followed the people paid back to both the Congress and Mulayam government in the same coin. It dethroned the Mulayam government and returned Congress with a representation lesser than before- 21 against 25 earlier.

Shibboo Soren - The Congress hero

NDA had, from the day one, opposed the inclusion of Shibboo Soren in the Council of Ministers as he was facing charges of murder. But Dr. Manmohan Singh and Smt. Sonia Gandhi were so much beholden to him for the favour for having made them climb to power that they made him take the oath as minister not once, twice but thrice.

What a shame that a Cabinet Minister of Manmohan government was standing as accused as a murder in courts in Delhi and Ranchi! The stand of BJP-led NDA was vindicated when Shibboo Soren was sentenced to life imprisonment for murder. UPA made history when its minister in office was convicted of murder and sent to jail.

In appeal, however, Shri Shibboo Soren was acquitted by the High Court and the UPA government, for understandable reasons, decided not to file an appeal before the Supreme Court.

Shri Shibboo Soren wanted his coveted office in the Union cabinet back. But when he failed to get it, he is reported to be sulking in anger.

Issuing certificates of innocence

One of the reasons that prompted Smt. Sonia Gandhi to formulate a post-election alliance with parties against whom Congress had fought a bitter no-holds-barred electoral battle in Lok Sabha elections, seems to be her effort to use the opportunity of power to cleanse the dirt accumulated on Congress face because of many scams, scandals and corruption indulged in by the party. Congress was instrumental in using the CBI to promote its political objective by getting the name of late Shri Rajiv Gandhi cleared from the courts. It got cleared the name of Capt. Satish Sharma who was involved in various cases of corruption in the notorious petrol pumps scam.

As a parting gift the retiring CBI chief, Shri U. S. Misra recommended the closure of the disproportionate assets case worth crores of rupees registered against Vincent George, private secretary to the then Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and later of Smt. Sonia Gandhi. Shri Misra had also been going slow on filing a charge sheet against Congress MP and former Chhattisgarh Chief Minister, Shri Ajit Jogi in the cash-for-MLA case.

CBI - Lalu's prosecutor and defender too

The CBI had investigated a case against both Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and his wife, Smt. Rabri Devi, alleging them to be possessing property disproportionate to the known sources of income. In the

meantime, Shri Lalu Prasad came to occupy the post of Union Railway Minister under UPA. He was acquitted by the High Court.

The Bihar government filed an appeal against his acquittal in the Supreme Court. But now that the support of the RJD supremo is very vital for the continuance of the present UPA government of Dr. Manmohan Singh, the CBI which investigated, filed and pursued the case against him for conviction for the offence, has now developed, obviously under directions from above, cold feet and is not willing to pursue the case against him in the Supreme Court.

It is a rare case in which the premier investigating agency of the country has now transformed itself from being the prosecuting agency into his defense counsel.

Congress has two contradictory voices

Minority reservation

Congress may be one. UPA may claim to be a single, united affiliation. But in practice it is not. On the single question: Should minorities be accorded reservation of seats in educational institutions and government jobs, two Central ministers, Union Home Minister Shri Shivraj Patil and Union Human Resource Development Minister Shri Arjun Singh spoke at variance on the issue on January 16 though both were discussing the issues concerning minorities.

In the morning Shri Patil speaking at the meeting of the State Minorities Commissions called by the National Commission for Minorities in Delhi, Shri Patil said that there has been a demand from minorities for reservation in educational institutions, "The question is" Shri Patil said, "can it be done? We have to apply our minds and find out how it can be done in the best possible manner." Not ruling out reservation for minorities, he said, "What can be done should be done and we cannot say it cannot be done." Moreover, the Home Minister said the government is looking into these aspects without coming to the final conclusion yet.

Shri Arjun Singh when asked about reservation for minorities after the meeting of the National Monitoring Committee on Minority Education said the Centre has not taken any decision on reservation for minorities. Stating that he did not know in what context Shri Patil had made the remarks, but when asked if minorities would be given reservation in educational institutions Shri Singh said there was no such proposal.

States' Reorganisation

The story is no different as far as the constitution of the 2nd

State Reorganisation Commission (SRC) is concerned. Doublespeak continues to rule on this issue too.

It was the UPA and the Congress themselves which floated the idea of constituting this Commission to mark time till the Lok Sabha elections to concede the demands for creation of new States of Vidarbha out of Maharashtra, Telangana out of Andhra Pradesh, and trifurcation of the present Uttar Pradesh.

On January 14 that the Congress said it had "absolutely no objection" for such a Commission. Congress spokesperson Shri Abhishek Singhvi said, "The issue of setting up of an SRC or creation of new states are matters for the government to decide. In the event that government believes that creation of some new states is valid, then Congress party will absolutely have no objection." He said that an expert body like the SRC would help look into the issues of creation of new states in a proper manner.

Uttar Pradesh Congress has come out with demand for carving out a separate "Bundelkhand" state out of UP with state party Chief Smt. Rita Bahuguna Joshi saying that her party was not against smaller states.

The UPA has set up a sub-committee headed by Minister for External Affairs Shri Pranab Mukherjee to go into the issue of smaller states.

But just after two days on January 16 the UPA government quietly buried its plans to set up a second States Reorganisation Commission to consider demands for separate states - Vidarbha, Telangana, Bundelkhand, Harit Pradesh, Poorvanchal and so on.

This is in sharp contrast to what Shri Veerappa Moily, senior Congress leader and chairperson of the Administrative Reforms Commission, told mediapersons in Hyderabad a week earlier. He said the government had taken a decision on the second State Reorganisation Commission and "it will be set up any time now".

Congress general secretary and Amethi MP Shri Rahul Gandhi, too, had endorsed the demand for a Bundelkhand State by dividing Uttar Pradesh. He argued that big states like UP were too unwieldy and hence hindered development.

However, sensing trouble from opponents of the second SRC and fearing that the move may open a Pandora's Box, the same Congress spokesperson Shri Abhishek Singhvi on January 16 said "there is no proposal before the government to set up the second States Reorganisation Commission". ■

Taming the Constitution to Make it dance to UPA tunes

During its tenure the UPA government has done more damage to the democratic institutions, norms and standards of our polity than did any other government in the past in independent India's history. Emergency imposed by Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1975 was one such black spot. The fragile and artificial character of this unprincipled and opportunistic alliance has got exposed by subsequent events. Like a wallpaper the National Common Minimum Programme has miserably failed to conceal the cracks in the wall itself.

Governors removed with a design

As against the established practice, UPA removed all the governors appointed during NDA regime "because they did not subscribe to the ideology" of the new government. In fact, Congress did it under a well thought-out plan. It replaced old governors with pliable Congress nominees known for their commitment to sign on the dotted line and act as directed. Subsequent events have justified the apprehension. The dismissal of BJP government in Goa within minutes of its having won a vote of confidence on the floor of the State assembly, administering of oath of office to Shri Shibu Soren who never had a majority and dissolution of Bihar assembly are some of the glaring instances.

Undemocratic imposition of President's rule in Nagaland

The step boomeranged

Just a month before the Nagaland was go to polls for the State assembly in the normal course, UPA government once again misused the office of the Governor to impose President's rule in the State. The

step was widely condemned by all democratic forces. Nagaland Chief Minister Shri Neiphiu Rio described it "dirty politics" because of fear of losing the Assembly elections. "Advocating Presidents Rule, the Congress has made it apparent that it wants to use the government machinery to win the Assembly elections in Nagaland," said Shri Rio. "What other reason could it have to be so desperate to impose President's rule with only a month to go for our government to last the full term", he asked

The Neiphiu Rio government had survived a controversial no-confidence motion on December 13.

Ultimately, the step boomeranged. The people of the State taught Congress a lesson and Rio government was voted back to power.

Disrespect to courts

The way Congress openly misused Government administration to protect Shri Shibu Soren, Shri Jaiprakash Narain Yadav, Shri Taslimuddin and the like was something painful for the whole country. Congress has openly opposed the Supreme Court and High Court verdicts on minority reservation. The public criticism by senior Congress leaders of Constitutional bodies like the Supreme Court, Election Commission and High Courts, has shocked the nation.

Confrontation with judiciary

It was because of the failure of the executive to act and to act in right earnest to promote and protect the people's interests that a vacuum was created in administration, which because of PILs and appeals, the judiciary had to fill. Sometimes the courts proved a stumbling block in the realisation of political whims and promotion of political and electoral interests of our politicians in power. This annoyed some of our ruling party leaders. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has dubbed it as "overreach" of the judiciary. It is because of the failure of UPA to maintain a healthy balance and liaison with judiciary that today we are witness to an unfortunate state of confrontation between the two important pillars of democracy -- the executive and the judiciary.



Where Prime Minister doesn't matter

Our parliamentary system of government recognises the Prime Minister as the supreme head of the executive, whose authority straddles both political and administrative domains. But the present Prime Minister at the moment is not the CEO of India Inc. He is the head in name only while his political powers stand usurped and are exercised by some other person. This extra-constitutional arrangement has imposed on the country a Prime Minister who is not the leader of his own party, who is not in command of his own government and who at every point is more answerable to his boss than to the people.

Dr. Manmohan Singh presents a strange paradox of a prime minister who is not the leader of the House to which his government is responsible. He has no right to vote in the House. He is the Leader of the House only in Rajya Sabha. In Lok Sabha the Leader of the House is not the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, but Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

Under the Westminster system of parliamentary government, the Leader of the Lower House of Parliament (Lok Sabha in our case) is the Prime Minister who presides over the meetings of the Parliamentary Party in the two Houses of Parliament.

Although the ruling party at the Centre is the Congress-led UPA, Dr. Manmohan Singh, again, is not leader of the Alliance. The leader is Smt. Sonia Gandhi.

During the earlier reign of NDA -- and earlier also when there were coalition governments -- the Prime Minister was the leader of the ruling alliance. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee was both the Leader of the House in Lok Sabha as also the leader of the ruling National Democratic Alliance.

This situation explains why Dr. Manmohan Singh may be the Prime Minister, yet he fails to exercise full control over the political

and administrative power in the country.

A PM who dreads facing people

Dr. Manmohan Singh will go down in history as the only Prime Minister who never faced the people and the electorate. He is not a member of the Lower House of Parliament (Lok Sabha). By refraining to contest election to Lok Sabha even from a safe seat, he has proved that he is vary of facing the people who are the very back bone of a democracy.

PM - Nobody for Ministers

Dr. Manmohan Singh suffers from another infirmity. His ministers do not take him into confidence before publicly announcing important matters of policy. Many a times, a new policy is actually a news he gets through newspapers or electronic media. That is why in 2005, he had to write to his Ministers to keep the PMO in touch with such policy announcements.

'A Cabinet of collective irresponsibility'

The concept of the collective responsibility of the Council of Ministers has been effectively destroyed during the last three years. Senior ministers of the government have freely abused and contradicted each other in public.

When UPA government decided to impose President's rule in Bihar following a hung assembly, it was Shri Lalu Prasad and his RJD which abstained from Lok Sabha although Shri Yadav and his party were party to that decision in the Cabinet. Morality demanded that either Shri Lalu Prasad should have resigned before abstaining or he should have been dismissed by the Prime Minister after he abstained from the House.

That is why citing instances, BJP General Secretary Shri Arun Jaitley while speaking during budget debate in Rajya Sabha in May 2007 described the Manmohan Singh government as "a cabinet of collective irresponsibility".

Similarly, even though Women's Reservation Bill was approved by the Union Cabinet in which Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan were present and later presented for approval in Rajya Sabha, yet both these leaders continue to oppose it outside although they consented to it in the Cabinet.

The worst Communal Alliance

By precept and practice Congress (and UPA) has proved itself to be the worst ever communal organisation in the country. Every programme, every policy, every action and every behaviour is motivated by rank communalism. It is dividing the country on communal lines. Its vote bank politics tinged with sectarian and narrow communalism has pushed to the background the Muslim League's two-nation theory and its communalism. It is drifting the country to the prospect of another partition.

Congress in Muslim League Mode

Disrespect to *Vande Mataram*

Before Independence, every Congress function, session and meeting commenced with the singing of *Vande Mataram* and Muslim members sung it as enthusiastically as their other non-Muslim brothers and sisters in the organisation. *Vande Mataram* had become the byword for Indian nationalism. These two words constituted the clarion call for every movement and agitation launched by the nation against the British. After Independence it was adopted as the National Song by the Constituent Assembly by one and all, the Muslim members included. What a shame that in the last sixty years of independence the Congress vitiated the communal environment so much and the things drifted to such a pass that even the country's Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi felt shy of singing the national song.

What a degradation that UPA government itself decided to celebrate the centenary of *Vande Mataram* on September 7, 2006, yet the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh failed to join the nation in singing this National Song that inspired hundreds and thousands of countrymen to lay down their lives and make other sacrifices fighting the alien rulers. The function had been organised by his

own Government. Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi too failed to participate in the function organised within the Congress office. This was purely done with an eye on the minority vote.

Majority-minority divide

It was the British who continued with their hegemony over India on the strength of their policy to 'divide and rule'. They stuck to power in India by creating a wedge between the majority Hindus and minority Muslims. When they ultimately failed; they divided the country.

That exactly seems to be the policy of the Congress which succeeded the English throne. The present Congress leadership under Smt. Sonia Gandhi is pursuing this 'divide and rule' policy with greater vengeance. It has gone after appeasement of the minority community as a part of its votebank politics to greater lengths witnessed never before.

Sachar Committee

With an eye on State assembly elections, particularly in Uttar Pradesh, UPA government constituted a Sachar Committee. The recommendations of the Sachar Committee, if implemented, will sow the seeds of another partition of the country on communal lines.

Poverty has no religion

Court Advises Centre Against Appeasement

The Delhi High Court on May 12, 2008 came close to suggesting that the Sachar Committee recommendations went against the pluralistic ethos the country. The court, which appeared in agreement with the appeasement charge against the government said: "You are trying to please one community and this is where the rot lies".

The court said the government should be waging a war against poverty rather than appeasing groups. "You are trying to please one community. Poverty is the common enemy. You should fight against poverty rather than saying that you would fight against poverty for one community only. This is where the rot lies," a two-member bench headed by justice T S Thakur said.

An anguished court said considerations of religion should not be the basis of allocating national resources. "You are saying that more money need to be spent for one minority community. Should it not cut across the caste and religion? Does the Sachar committee say that facilities are available to other communities?" the bench said

adding "such issues should not be decided on the basis of emotions".

The court was hearing a PIL, filed by Rashtriya Mukti Morcha, an NGO, alleging the committee report and government's follow up action was unconstitutional.

The Centre, however, rejected the view that it was giving any special treatment to any community. "If out of five children, one is neglected then can't it be provided some special treatment?" Additional Solicitor General P P Malhotra asked. But the bench was not satisfied with the contention. "Does it mean that drinking water facilities are available to the majority community and no person from it live in slums. Under the Constitution, can a welfare state say that it would focus on a particular area because the minority community resides there? Can it say that it would spend more money in that area?" the bench asked.

The Centre, however, contended that the PIL was politically motivated and the court should refrain from deciding these issues. "This is a political issue which cannot be decided in the court. It is to be decided by the people in election. The High Court had earlier imposed a cost of Rs 50,000 for filing frivolous petition," Mr Malhotra argued. He also said the Centre was not providing any reservation to minority community in jobs and educational institutions.

Soniaji, is it not communalism?

You write to Muslims, only in Urdu

The so-called self-professed 'secular' Congress and her supremo Smt. Sonia Gandhi has no qualms of conscience when it comes to appealing for votes of a particular community. She wrote letters to Muslims, in Urdu, seeking votes. This, she claims, was because of "her desire to see secular forces become stronger". But if any other political leader wrote similar letters to Hindus, in Hindi, she would have derided as 'communal'. Is there any limit to hypocrisy?

Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi has sent signed letters, written and signed in Urdu, to 15,000 members of the Muslim community, seeking their support for party candidates in the ongoing Uttar Pradesh Assembly elections. The one-page letter says that as head of Congress party, it was her desire to see secular forces become stronger. If Muslims join hands, in the eyes of our pseudo-secularists, "secular forces become stronger." But if Hindus join hands they cry loud : Communal forces become stringer.

In the letter, Smt. Gandhi drew attention towards the 'present situation in Uttar Pradesh' and said, "It is my personal appeal to

you to take caste and religion head-on to fulfill your long-cherished dreams'. In the end, the letter asks the people to support Congress candidates in their respective areas. UP Congress leaders claimed the letter has been sent to 15,000 Muslim leaders and 'respected members' of the community.

A new Ramayana Textbook Controversy **Derogatory words used against Lord Ram, Ma Sita**

The ABVP activists and DU students organised a relay hunger strike at the gate of the Arts Faculty of the University. Hundreds of activists sat on a dharna to register their protest against denigration of Gods and Goddesses in the essay by A.K. Ramanujan, titled "Three Hundred Ramayanas: Five Examples and Three Thoughts on Translation" for the course on "Ancient Indian Culture". "The controversial book has references to Hanuman, which are very offensive. The chapter starts with a query that how many Ramayanas are there, and then a story (without indicating its source) is cited wherein Hanuman is described as 'henchman' of Lord Ram and then again as a 'tiny monkey'.

Also, it has been suggested Ravana gave birth to Sita through nasal sneeze," said Shri Niharika Sharma, ABVP's Delhi general secretary. Shri Dina Nath Batra (convener of the Shiksha Bachao Andolan Samiti) said the Police are extremely under pressure as the Prime Minister's daughter Dr Upinder Singh is involved in it. Despite so much damage and violence in Mumbai by the activists of Raj Thackeray's party, he was granted bail the same day. But in this case, the ABVP activists were denied bail and sent to judicial custody for two weeks. It clearly shows the involvement of the Prime Minister in this case, he alleged.

NCERT ultimately admits mistakes **To remove 'objectionable passages' from history texts**

The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) on January 30, 2008 assured the Delhi High Court of measures to remove certain "objectionable passages" from History textbooks of Class VI to XII, beginning next academic session. "All objectionable passages will disappear in the new textbooks from April 1, 2008," the NCERT counsel submitted before a Bench, headed by Justice T S Thakur. Counsel for Deena Nath Batra, a social activist, had filed the petition seeking the court's intervention to direct NCERT to delete "objectionable" references to freedom fighters and other

historical figures in its textbooks.

The NCERT had earlier informed the court that it would remove 20 objectionable passages - including references to Sikh religious leader Guru Gobind Singh, scientist Aryabhata, Mughal Emperor Akbar, and describing author Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and freedom fighters Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai as militants - from its books.

Dividing education on communal lines

The UPA has intensified its attempt to widen the majority-minority divide in the country's system of education. The worst communalist in the garb of secularism, UPA HRD Minister Shri Arjun Singh, ordered 50 percent reservation for Muslims in Aligarh Muslim University. The High Court set aside this decision declaring that AMU is not a minority institution. Yet, the government has gone to the Supreme Court and although the matter is *sub judice* Shri Arjun Singh continues to declare that he is bent upon restoring the minority status to AMU despite court verdict.

BJP stands for effective governmental and societal action to promote education among the minorities. However, this worthy objective cannot be achieved by the HRD ministry's ill-conceived decisions, which are intended only to garner the minorities' votes for the Congress in elections. The Congress leadership appears to be completely indifferent to the long-term effects of such a divisive politics.

Detoxifying history books

HRD Minister Shri Arjun Singh is playing with the facts of history and Indian culture in the name of detoxification of history books just to please a particular constituency of voters. But he had to cut a sorry figure when the Delhi High Court upheld the contention of a petitioner that the NCERT had played havoc with the history of the country. The High Court states: It is stated by the learned counsel for the NCERT that out of 75 objectionable passages in the text books which are pointed out by the petitioner, 45 of them have already been removed by the NCERT. It is also stated that 21 objectionable passages will be removed from the text books with effect from 1.4.2007 in view of new curriculum introduced and the remaining 8 passages shall also be taken out from the texts with effect from 1.4.2008.

In these textbooks great martyrs like Sardar Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose have been described as 'terrorists'. Derogatory language has been used against Jats and

Religion based reservation

Solely motivated by vote-bank politics disregarding the national interests, the Congress government in AP reserved 5 percent seats in government jobs for Muslims solely on the basis of religion. BJP opposed the move. The High Court set aside this religion-based reservation as “unconstitutional”, yet Congress is bent upon finding ways and means to go against the constitutional provisions disregarding court verdicts.

Religion based reservation for Dalit Muslims.

The BJP is amazed and disturbed by the conspicuous silence of the government, particularly the Prime Minister, in regard to the repeated claims being made by senior Ministers of the Government demanding religion based reservation by including Dalit Muslims. These demands are not only unconstitutional but designed to promote the worst form of appeasement without constitutional sanction.

The BJP has always supported the economic, social and educational development of the minorities. It has always believed in the motto of justice to all and appeasement of none. The shameless vote bank politics being practiced for the last more than 50 years by the so called secular parties, has established once again that the genuine welfare of the minorities has never been their motivation.

Spreading curse of Casteism

The Hindu society was universally castigated by other religions for the prevalence of caste system. Other religions prided themselves for the absence of any such distinction. But now the moment a person converted himself, he merges himself in the new order losing his caste identity. As such he also ceased to be an untouchable if he ever was in the Hindu society.

The provision of reservation was made in the Constitution only for the uplift of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes which existed only in Hindu society and nowhere else.

The demand for treating converted individuals as scheduled castes is the very repudiation of what other religions stand for.

‘Secularists’ demand dreaded terrorist’s release

That the Congress, UPA partners and the Left parties were hand in glove with each other in competing for minority appeasement

was once again proved, beyond doubt, when the Congress-led UDF government in Kerala moved a resolution on March 16, 2006 for the release of dreaded terrorist Abdul Nasser Madani charged not only with harbouring the blasts accused, including Ooma Babu alias Majid and others allegedly involved in serial explosions that shook Coimbatore in February 1998 just ahead of the arrival of Shri L. K. Advani for an election rally killing 59 and maiming another 200 innocent persons, but also with liaisoning with Pakistan’s ISI for terror training of Al Umma activists. This was done purely with an eye on the State assembly elections. The then ruling party led by Congress and the Left opposition were trying to score points over each other to earn the sympathy of Muslim voters. The resolution was passed unanimously. Nothing more needs to be said about the sincerity of UPA and the Left in fighting terrorism, particularly those having links with ISI.

Congress seeks votes in Madani names

In the bye-elections to the Tiruvambadi Assembly Constituency in Kerala in December 2006, both the Congress and the Communists did not fight elections on national or State issues, but it was a straight contest between the two to prove who was the better champion of dreaded terrorists, rank communalists, and the Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussain. CPM issued a poster seeking votes with a portrait of Madani. Congress did not lag behind in laying prostrate before the notorious ‘Terror King’ Abdul Nasir Madani of Coimbatore serial bomb blast fame. The Congress posters carried no portrait of Prime Minister or Smt. Sonia Gandhi. But it did seek votes in the name of Madani and Saddam Hussain.

Afzal Guru, vote catcher for Congress

At places, Congress also sought votes in the name of Parliament case convict Afzal Guru sentenced to death by the highest court of the country. In the end, the ruling CPM scored an ignominious win by a majority of 246 votes, more so, in the face of the fact that only six months back the ruling LDF had won this very seat with an impressive lead of more than 5,000 votes. Madani had issued a fatwa to Muslims to vote for the CPM nominee. And yet the great Marxist party and the Congress continue to boast of being ‘secular’ and fighters against terrorism!

It is a great paradox that on the one hand, Congress and Communist hurl innuendoes on nationalists like Vir Savarkar and, on the other, pay obeisance to dreaded terrorists for the sake of votes.

M.F. Hussain versus Danish cartoons 'Secularists' exposed

Nobody, however high or low and to whichever community he/she may belong, has the right to hurt the religious sentiments of any community – minority or majority. But, surprisingly, when painter M. F. Hussain, hurt Hindu feelings by caricaturing and painting Hindu goddesses and Bharatmata in the nude, many of our 'secularists' preferred silence in the name of Hussain's freedom of expression. But when some derogatory controversial cartoons of Prophet Mohammad were published in far away Denmark and there was furore among the community over it, the same 'secularists' in UPA, Left parties and others felt very much concerned. A senior journalist, Shri Alok Tomar, was arrested for hurting the feelings of the minority community for reproducing the cartoons in his magazines. But so far no action has been taken by the 'secular' UPA government against the painter Hussain who hurt the feelings of Hindus by his paintings. There seems to be two laws for two different communities in this country.

Playing politics with Afzal

UPA sitting judgement over SC verdict

Supreme Court of India upheld the conviction of Parliament attack case prime accused Afzal Guru and sentenced him to death. Immediately the Congress Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir demanded clemency for Afzal although after a month he did resile and denied that he had ever made such a demand.

The family of Afzal Guru filed a mercy petition with the President of India who forwarded the same to the Home Minister. Initially, Afzal Guru himself said that he would not seek clemency. But, after sometime, he also filed a petition with the President of India.

BJP and some other political parties have demanded that the judgment of the Supreme Court should be honoured so that justice is done to the families of security and other personnel who sacrificed their lives while saving the nation's top elite national leadership holed up inside Parliament House at that time because of the terrorist attack masterminded by Afzal Guru on December 13, 2001. It is worth recalling that when the accused convicted and sentenced to death for murder of late Smt. Indira Gandhi filed a mercy petition with the President of India, the then Government of India had examined and sent its recommendation to the President of India within

a few days which was rejected in less than 24 hours. The convicts were executed as per law.

But, in the case of Afzal Guru the present Congress-led UPA government is adopting double standards and just trying to sit over the matter. It is a matter of shame that the UPA government is playing with the sentiments of the families of the slain security men to derive political and electoral advantage. It amounts to denial of justice to the martyrs and their bereaved families.

The families of slain security men had demanded bringing the prime accused Afzal to justice by implementing the court orders for his execution immediately. They had threatened that if that was not done before December 13 they would return the gallantry awards and medals granted to them. Since the government failed to do justice to them, as announced, on December 13 they returned their medals and awards to the President of India. But, UPA has no regrets.

The silence of both Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi lends credence to apprehensions that the 'Save Afzal' campaign has their implied support. These are further strengthened by the UPA government's delay in taking a decision on the mercy petition filed on behalf of Afzal, which was submitted to the President and who, in turn, had passed it on to the government for its recommendation.

The perfidy and partiality of those who are supporting the 'Save Afzal' campaign stands exposed from the fact that clemency petition on behalf of the terrorist, who was convicted of the murder of General Vaidya, was dismissed within 15 hours.

Where is Afzal's mercy petition?

The mercy plea of Mohammad Afzal, a death row convict in the 2001 Parliament attack case, does not find mention in a home ministry document, sent after a Right to Information request. Interestingly, among the cases enumerated, it shows that one mercy plea by a MP convict was disposed of within a week.

In reply to a Right to Information application of a Delhi resident Subhash Chandra Agrawal wherein he had sought details on mercy pleas pending till date before the President, the Home Ministry came up with a list of 24 death row convicts, but there is no reference to Afzal.

A Jaish-e-Mohammad activist, Afzal had approached former President APJ Abdul Kalam in late 2006, seeking clemency after the Supreme Court upheld his death sentence on August 4, 2005, and

subsequently dismissed his review and curative petition. In reply to Agrawal's RTI plea filed on December 17, 2007, the pendency list named 24 convicts including those in connection with Rajiv Gandhi's assassination-Murugan, Santhan and Arivu-crucially misses out on the name of Mohammad Afzal.

Reservation for Muslims & Christians in TN

The Bharatiya Janata Party denounces the Tamil Nadu government's decision to grant exclusive reservation for Muslims and Christians in government services and educational institutions. This action will divide the society further on religious lines and is against the spirit of the Constitution and secularism.

It is worth recalling that after exhaustive deliberations in the Constituent Assembly it was decided not to allow reservations based on religion. Curiously the Tamil Nadu government is taking umbrage under the communal Government Order of 1921 and 1927. It is indeed unfortunate and surprising that a state government has made an earlier and divisive GO of the British times the basis for action in the 21st century in democratic India and that too after India has adopted the Constitution in 1950! This unfortunate decision is borne out of compulsive poor vote bank politics. It will adversely affect the national unity and will also give a fillip to conversions.

The BJP is in favour of special action programmes and schemes for the economically and educationally backward sections of society irrespective of religion. The BJP however denounces any Affirmative Action that is solely based on religion and that lacks a clear scientific foundation.

For centuries social discrimination was the evil of Hindu society, which was corrected through reservation for socially backward sections of society under a constitutional arrangement. As religions, Islam and Christianity do not discriminate between the followers of their respective faiths on any basis of social discrimination and therefore cannot claim reservation on that basis or ground. The poorer sections of Muslims are already covered under the Mandal Commission and are getting reservations.

BJP wants the country to take a comprehensive view on this question so as to provide reservations to economically backward classes of all sections of society in addition to reservations for the SCs, STs and OBCs.

Fundamentalists win

Taslima forced to leave India

The dissident Bangladeshi writer, Ms Taslima Nasreen had to opt to leave India instead of suffering the solitary confinement in a 'safe house' for so many months. She was virtually under house arrest with nobody allowed to meet her and she was not allowed to meet anybody. The Muslim fundamentalists, who are after her head for her liberal writings, had been demanding her expulsion from the country. It clearly means a failure of the UPA government to provide security to her against the threats of fundamentalists. The government has also failed to respect her freedom of expression. It marks a victory for the fundamentalist forces in the country.

Speaking to a Delhi newspaper correspondent, Ms Taslima said: "I wanted to, I still want to, live in India, make it my home. But look at my terrible existence. I can't meet friends, people can't meet me"

It may be recalled that Gujarat Chief Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, had declared that Ms. Taslima was welcome in his State and promised her full freedom and security.

Supreme Court stays AP's 4% Muslim quota

The Supreme Court, according to The Economic Times, on September 28 restrained Andhra Pradesh Government from making further admissions into the educational and professional colleges under the law providing for 4% reservations to Muslims.

While staying the religion quota, the apex court questioned the legality of religion-based quota and methodology for determination of the Muslim community as a backward class.

A bench comprising Chief Justice K G Balakrishnan, Justice R V Raveendran and Justice V S Sirpurkar ordered, "There shall be no further admissions". It asked the government to maintain status quo on the issue of admissions of Muslims students under quota law. However, the court said that the right of those already admitted under such reservation policy shall not be affected.

During the course of hearing, the court questioned the reservation policy for Muslims as a community. "Such quota should have been provided not as Muslims but as socially and educationally backward classes" remarked Justice Raveendran.

The bench also wondered whether quota could be extended based on religion or community under the provisions of Constitution. "We can understand, the classification of Backward Classes as

a whole and consequent reservation for such group," the court said.

It expressed its dismay at the categorisation of sub sects into 'socially and educationally backward classes' and 'other Muslim groups'. Fourteen sub-sects have been put under SEBC and the 15th referred to as Other Muslim groups. It implied that many other sub sects will get benefit under the quota law, observed the court.

The court also wanted to know the quantum of reservation for OBCs in the State. When it was brought to the notice that it was 25%, the court said that adding of 4% more has pushed the total reservation limit in the state to the upper ceiling of reservation that is 50% of the total seats.

Senior Counsel Harish Salve appearing for anti-quota petitioners said that religion based reservation will have wide scale ramifications for the country. It is entirely communal and violatate of Articles 14, 15 and 16 of the Constitution, said Salve.



Hurting Hindu sentiments on Ram Sethu

Rama Setu, - the bridge - which is revered by millions of people, Hindus, Muslims and Christians, as Setu Mandir, Adisetu Adam's Bridge etc., is a unique structure that is a symbol of Ancient Indian Heritage and an extraordinary feat of engineering skill. The major cause of the resentment arises from the fact that the UPA government is insisting on the proposed alignment of the canal which will destroy the bridge.

The issue in question is not the Project but the alignment and the reasons for selecting it arbitrarily and starting the work without proper studies which has resulted in hurting the sentiments of not only Hindus but of other communities as well. Crores of Hindus believe that this under water bridge was constructed at the command of Sri Rama.

The project should have been designed to incorporate tsunami protection structure along India's Coast line which was impacted by the devastating tsunami.

The alignment has been determined without any serious consultation regarding environmental and security impacts.

Ignoring the concerns raised by Prof. Tad S. Murthy, world's foremost tsunami expert, who categorically stated the disastrous consequences of this alignment on Kerala coastal region (which perhaps was saved due to the existing bridge), the alignment was not changed.

The implications of the tsunami on the placer deposits and the implications of the natural radioactivity from the black thorium sands of Kerala have not been taken in to account.

The UPA government by choosing this alignment has deliberately ignored the sentiments of not only Hindus but of all communities who hold Ram Setu as a symbol of cultural heritage. The UPA

government has rather considered US interests more important than the national sentiments and interests.

While the BJP is not opposed to the SSCP, the party on the other hand is certainly and seriously concerned with the preservation and protection of this most ancient cultural heritage of our India's strategic and maritime interests have been ignored.

There is nothing to show that before inaugurating the project the Indian Navy was consulted on the full implications of the present canal.

Congress hurts Hindu Sentiments

The Congress-led UPA never loses no opportunity of hurting Hindu sentiments and feelings on any issue. HRD Minister Shri Arjun Singh is already notorious on this issue. But the UPA went a step ahead and in an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court in the Ram Sethu case. The UPA government said that "there is no scientific or historical evidence to prove the existence of 'Lord Ram'".

When there was furore all over the country and in Parliament by BJP and NDA partners the UPA government had to cut a sorry figure and withdraw the affidavit. Surprisingly the UPA government has yet to take action against the Minister who was responsible for the offending the Hindu sentiments. All it did was to suspend two officers of the Archeological Department of India.

BJP had throughout been of the opinion that this monument of historical, religious and national importance should not be touched or demolished. BJP has throughout been demanding that it is not opposing Ram Sethu Samudram Project but it only wants that the Ram Sethu bridge should be protected and the an alternative route explored.

Many Engineers, Archeologists, Historians and Economists have already opined that the Ram Sethu Samudram Project was also not commercially viable. Finally when the matter went to the Supreme court of India in the first week of May it ordered the government to explore the possibility of an alternative route that does not damage the Ramsetu. The UPA too had admitted it had gone ahead with the project without a scientific and archeological survey.

Supreme Court asks : Can Ram Sethu be declared National Monument?

On May 9, 2008 the Supreme Court asked the Centre to explore the possibility of conducting an archaeological study to find out

whether Ram Sethu could be declared a national monument. The order virtually threw open a window for a new alignment for the proposed corridor – a demand that is being put forward by those opposing the present alignment.

The Centre has been maintaining that the most suitable route to execute the project was alignment No. 6 which passes through the Ram Sethu. However, in its fresh affidavit, the government has said that since no study was conducted on Ram Sethu, it cannot be said that whether the structure was man-made or natural.

"There is a specific direction of the Madras High Court that the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) should carry investigations whether Ram Sethu is an ancient monument or not," a bench comprising Chief Justice KG Balakrishnan, Justice RV Raveendran and Justice JM Panchal said. The court said the petitioners opposing the project have put serious arguments for conducting the ASI probe and diverting the project to other alignments.

"You (Centre) also explore the possibility of carrying out the project through any other channels (alignments)," the bench said. The court said that the government consider these two aspects as directed by the HC on June 19 last year. It then posted the mater for further hearing on July 22.

The petitioners opposing the project had argued that without an archeological study to arrive at a conclusion whether Ram Sethu is man-made or natural, the Ram Sethu cannot be destroyed for the sake of the project.



In Kashmir

Confusion worst confounded

Kashmir problem is the gift of Pandit Nehru to the nation. The country continues to pay heavily for his blunders and those of his daughter, Smt. Indira Gandhi who lost the golden opportunity in 1971 to strike a settlement of Kashmir issue on India's terms.

The country has so far lost more than 80,000 innocent lives in the terror incidents during the last about 18 years, more than the country lost in the three wars with Pakistan and China. There is no ray of hope of a settlement in the near future.

Talks on Kashmir

Something fishy seems to be brewing up in UPA's talks with Pakistan on Kashmir.

The nation has expressed its resolve through numerous unanimous resolutions in Parliament reiterating that Jammu & Kashmir is an integral, inalienable part, like any other State of the country. Successive Prime Ministers have declared that the only point of dispute between India and Pakistan is the liberation of about one-third of Kashmir, known as Pakistan-Occupied Kashmir, that is under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan. The present Prime Minister too reiterated this resolve of the nation in one of his addresses to the nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on the Independence Day. India believes that the aggressor (Pakistan) cannot be allowed to get away with the fruits of aggression.

Back to square one

The new Pakistan government headed by Prime Minister Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani has on May 11 said that the various proposals suggested by President Musharraf for the resolution of Kashmir issue were not acceptable to the new government. He said Musharraf's four-point formula was "actually the President's idea. This is not the idea of the newly elected government". He termed Musharraf proposals as "half-baked things that didn't have the mandate of

Parliament". He said that "the process to resolve the Kashmir issue must start from the UN resolutions and the aspiration of the people of Kashmir".

This only means that India is back to square one as far as the so-called "composite dialogue" with Pakistan for resolution of Kashmir tangle is concerned.

Protest march carrying pro Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba flags

Protest march carrying pro Pakistani Lashkar-e-Taiba flags, shouting slogans in favour of Pakistan in Kashmir Valley by LeT militants is a serious development and Government of India should take immediate action against the protestors. This is a direct challenge to national security.

Pro-Pakistani Militant action is the result of a soft policy adopted by the Prime Minister and UPA government, towards the challenge of terrorism. Raising pro-Pakistani slogans is a threat to national security. BJP always stands for policy of zero tolerance for matters concerning danger to national security.

Troop reduction

Troop reduction particularly from hilly areas of the Jammu region is continuing unabated. The whole 27th division consisting of 10,000 troops is ordered out of Rajouri. More serious is the development in Hilkaka region. Hilkaka, which was a strong base of militants and which was destroyed through "Operation Sarpvinash" by Army in 2003, was fortified by many big and small pickets. Even from this region many small posts have been vacated and number of troops in main posts are also reduced. The work of building up a road to Hilkaka launched by NDA was halted after Mufti Mohammed Syed assumed the power.

Troops have been removed from Mendhar, which is a strong centre of militants and notorious route for infiltration and which has recently witnessed a tension arising out of militant's efforts to forcefully acquire a private land for erection of Madarssa. Mamonkot, Ichni, Bagobas, Nemoch, Batter, Kalaband, Hosodtap in Riyasi and Mahor tehsils of Udhampur and Marah in Poonch have also witnessed troops vacating the pickets. The same is the story for Dhar, Guliar, Bhela, Keb and Dasui in Budhal tehsil of Rajouri district. The timing of reduction of troops from this sensitive area is more serious as infiltration increases in the summer.

The situation is becoming extremely sensitive given the divergent signals emanating from various corners when read together. On the one hand the Defence Minister assures of non-reduction of forces, while the hilly areas of Jammu region are actually experiencing the reduction.

Similarly while Gulam Nabi Azad calls for consensus on reduction of forces, the PDP is claiming that the Centre has agreed for reduction of troops immediately from public places. The Army sources are quoted as describing the ground situation as a routine relocation exercise.

However, the question arises as to where is the new relocation and fortification taking place in the hilly areas? Moreover, daily political sermons of "zero tolerance" in the current backdrop are having a serious demoralising effect on our armed forces. Given the continuing efforts to change the demography in the Jammu region, confusion on such a vital matter of national security is worrisome.

Troops pulled out

Bharatiya Janata Party denounces the troop pull out from boundary districts of Doda, Poonch and Rajouri districts of Jammu region. It seems that Manmohan Singh government has buckled under the pressure of Mufti Mohammad Sayed's PDP. The whole brigade has been ordered to pull out from Budhal in Rajouri district. Without declaring officially the work of troop pull out has begun in full swing in many areas of the region.

Troops are being pulled out even from Kulhand of Doda district, where only last year 19 Hindus were massacred. Military pickets have been removed from Shatru, Daschan, Pader, Balesa, Martam, Dharmshala, Puranu beyond Kulhand. Military pickets are reported to have been asked to vacate from Tanna Manchi, Manjakot, Khwas, Shahdra Sharif, Kalakot, Tarihat, Dalhori beyond Budhal in Rajouri district.

Even in Poonch area the troop pull out is visible, where Military pickets are being vacated from Biji, Swarnkot, Gundi, Mandi, Chandiman, Krishnaghata, Chilas. Even from the vicinity of Poonch city the troops are being moved out.

This exercise commenced as the stand off between Congress and PDP threatened the stability of Gulam Nabi Azad government. For UPA security of Congress government in J&K is more important than the security of the country.

Troops pullout not viable, feels J&K Governor

Whatever may be the intentions of the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh who seems to be succumbing to PDP pressure (as also of Pakistan) to reduce Army presence in Jammu and Kashmir, the State Governor Lt Gen (Retd.) SK Sinha, according to the Press reports feels otherwise.

He has declared that he was opposed to complete troop reduction in the State, as it was not possible to do in a sensitive border State "even if the situation returned to normalcy."

"I agree that the situation in the State has improved. But it is not practical to withdraw the army from States, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Rajasthan, which share borders with neighbouring country (Pakistan)," he said at a seminar jointly organized by the New Delhi based Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies and J&K Police at Srinagar.

Governor rejects demand for demilitarisation

Jammu and Kashmir Governor has rejected demands for demilitarisation of Kashmir. No country could abdicate its natural sovereignty over its territory, he added.

"Demilitarisation means pulling out the Army from the state. I ask, 'Can any country abdicate its natural sovereignty over its territory?' the Governor told reporters on the sidelines of a book release function at the Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA) in New Delhi on August 13.

"So far as the return of the troops to the barracks is concerned, it can take place when peace is restored in the State. We haven't reached that state as yet," General Sinha said.

While there are estimated to be a thousand militants in the State, the Governor pointed out, there are "thousands of sleeper cells" and "thousands more waiting to infiltrate from across the border". He further said, "Some people ask why there are five lakh security personnel in the State.

But there is 700 km of border. Nobody, he wondered, asks how many troops Pakistan has deployed along its border?"

UPA keeping nation in dark

Manmohan Government is keeping the nation in dark on the troops pull-out issue. Nobody knows what is the ground reality whether troops have been withdrawn or reduced or not.

Qayyum gives a lie to Musharraf claims

Former POK President admits terrorist training camps

Former POK President and Kashmiri leader Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, according to Press reports, has stuck to his guns, saying the truth about cross-border militant training camps could not be hidden, nor could anyone find fault with his desire for peace in Kashmir, and that the United Nations resolutions were “obsolete.”

On return from New Delhi Sardar Qayyum Khan also known as the First Mujahid, said it was “a fact that there were training camps [for militants] in Pakistan and in Azad Kashmir [Pakistan Occupied Kashmir].”

“It was in the open. We cannot keep something like this under wraps. The Americans can give you all the details about these camps. These things cannot be kept hidden in this day and age. We should speak the truth, or we will be exposed as liars,” Mr. Khan said.

Havana Surrender

The guilty and victim on same footings

Havana Joint Statement of September 16, 2006 issued by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf is an unprecedented capitulation of India before Pakistan on the issue of cross-border terrorism. It has wiped out, in one stroke, all that had been achieved by India in its war against terror through years of hard work with the international community, and bilaterally with Pakistan.

According to the Prime Minister, President Musharraf had assured him that Pakistan had no hand in perpetuating terrorism and the former has accepted this statement of Musharraf implicitly and without challenge. Dr. Manmohan Singh’s statement that Pakistan is also a victim of terrorism is baffling, to say the least. The perpetrator of cross-border terrorism has been co-opted through this Joint Statement as a partner in the fight against terrorism. The distinction between the aggressor and the victim of aggression has been done away with.

What is in the non-paper- Mr. PM?

According to reports, India has, through back channels, given a non-paper to Pakistan, making suggestions for the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir issue. The Government of India has not taken Parliament and the people of India into confidence on the contents

of this non-paper. However, according to Pakistani sources, this contains suggestions for joint control over Jammu and Kashmir. Is this joint mechanism suggested by India at Havana the first step towards that joint control? Are unseen powers pushing India towards a solution of Jammu and Kashmir that India has rejected all along? Is the Prime Minister of India acting under the pressure of the Left parties in India, who seem to have made common cause with these unseen powers on this issue? Or is it petty vote bank politics which has persuaded the Prime Minister to negate all that India, even under his own government, has said and stood for on the question of cross-border terrorism?

Conspiracy on Kashmir

In recent days a preposterous concept has been floated by certain American think-tanks. They propose the establishment of something called the “United States of Kashmir” whose sovereignty shall be shared between India and Pakistan.

The UPA Government tacitly gives an impression that it is not averse to discussing these matters. This is destructive for the country’s unity and integrity which is not negotiable under any circumstances. The entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of India and this has been reiterated by the nation through unanimous resolutions passed in Parliament.

Any compromise with this fundamental tenets of India’s nationhood will never be allowed. Improving ties with Pakistan and strengthening people-to-people relations between the two countries is one thing and bartering away Kashmir or even agreeing to discuss the State’s future status is altogether a different matter.

Dastardly Hindu Killings

The internal security of the country has never been under threat greater than that as at present. The Central government is guilty of complacency and laxity. Dastardly killing of 35 Hindus in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir on the last day of April, 2006 and killing of two BJP workers, Shri Bharat Bhushan of Doda and Shri Munshi Ram of Batote on May 13 when hand grenades were thrown at a peaceful BJP procession is a pointer to that direction.

It was Jana Sangh under the leadership of late Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee which led the agitation for integration of J&K with the rest of India. His slogan was that Jana Sangh and the nation will never tolerate *do nishan, do vidhan, do pradhan* in the same country.

He attained martyrdom while fighting for this cause. BJP is continuing with his legacy and is in the forefront to keep Kashmir an integral part of India, like any other State of the country. The martyrdom of these two BJP workers is in furtherance of that very cause.

It only shows that the situation is getting out of the control of both the State and the Central governments. Through a definite plan Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir were being targeted by militants to force "ethnic cleansing" by forcing their exodus from Jammu, particularly Doda and Udhampur districts. It is an attack on the entire political system and also a challenge to the Indian nation.

Spurt in terror in J&K

The State was witness to another spurt of terror strikes in the first week of May 2006 killing a dozen of persons.

mechanism with Pakistan to investigate cases of terror. Our Prime Minister declared that Pakistan too was a victim of terror.

BJP has rightly said that the perpetrator of cross-border terrorism has been co-opted through this Joint Statement as a partner in the fight against terrorism.

Nobody, not perhaps the Prime Minister himself, knows what is the next in store for the country on the issue.

J&K temples being sold

Kashmiri Pandits have alleged that the Muslim-majority government in Jammu & Kashmir is ignoring illegal sale of Hindu temples properties in the State. Less than 5,000 Kashmiri Pandits who live in the Kashmir valley say that their resistance to sale of temple properties has exposed them to threats from a very powerful land mafia. They alleged they have been warned against protesting.

The Pandits say that despite the state government's "verbal assurances" to protect temple properties, nothing is being done to save them. A promise to bring in legislation during the recent assembly session to prevent sale of such properties was not fulfilled. To the disappointment of Pandits, the legislature was adjourned sine die without introduction of the bill.

The Pandits say there is more to the non-introduction of the Bill than meets the eye. They claim that powerful interests, including a land mafia, scuttled the legislation.

The ground realities in Kashmir are alarming. The Dharmarth Trust headed by Dr Karan Singh has locked up an ancient and historical temple Ramjee of Barbar Shah. This is the first time in its known history that the temple has been locked. Security forces living in the adjacent dharmshala have been told not to enter the temple precincts.

"For all these years, it was a routine with us, the few Kashmiri Pandits living in the Valley, to come here every Sunday for a get-together, make prasad and distribute it among devotees. But the trust management, with the help of the State government, locked up the temple and no one has been allowed to enter," said Vijay Sas of the Kashmiri Pandit Sangarsh Samiti (KPSS), Kashmir.

Pandits alleged that some people in the Dharmarth Trust management want to sell off the property of the temple, valued at Rs 300 crore. In fact, some of them allege that the property would be sold to an influential Muslim of the Valley. The property located just across the Rambagh Bridge and opposite the Metrological Department is at a prime location. Inside the huge plot of land, there is an ancient Shiva temple, said to be around 1,200 years old. The lingam is said to be more than 8.5 feet high.

The KPSS filed a PIL in the Supreme Court and was asked to file a fresh case in the concerned High Court. A case is already pending in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir, Srinagar.

"Since January 2008, another incident of sale of our religious and community property has surfaced in Kashmir. It is the sale of DAV School in Rainawari by one Roshan Lal Raina who was just a teacher in that school but turned into a broker," said Shri Sas. Pandits allege that the sale took place at the behest of an influential official attached to the Director-General of Police, J&K.

"KPSS has taken the legal course in the matter but we are worried," said a displaced Pandit. But they hope the court will intervene and stay the sale of temples. "If the government fails to bring a Bill in the ongoing session of the state Assembly to ban sale of temples and other religious properties, we will proceed on a fast unto death," KPSS president Shri Sanjay Tickoo said.

UPA doing nothing for displaced Kashmiri Pandits

The UPA government is very much worried about the welfare of Bangladeshi refugees who have entered the country illegally. It wishes to do everything to make them comfortable and enjoy the rights and privileges an Indian citizen is getting. Our Prime Minis-

ter could not sleep for the whole night seeing the agony of the mother of an Indian who was allegedly involved in a terrorist crime in UK. But the UPA has a sweet sleep over the plight of lakhs of Kashmiri Pandits who have been thrown out of their homes and hearths because of terrorism and turned refugees in their own country. Practically, nothing has been done for help these hapless families, perhaps only because they belong to majority community in the country.



When it's China, UPA on its knees

UPA seems to be groping in the dark on its relations and dealings with China.. It has no definite policy. That is why it has been found lacking many a times. The progress towards solving the boundary dispute is moving at a snail's pace. The villain of the piece is the UPA's total dependence on the Left parties for its survival -- those Left parties, particularly, for the CPM for whom interest of China are superior to those of the nation.

Arunachal is ours

Just a week ahead of Chinese President Hu Jintao's state visit to India, Beijing's envoy in New Delhi Sun Yuxi claimed that Arunachal Pradesh is a Chinese territory. On November 13, 2006 he said "In our position, the whole of the state of Arunachal Pradesh is Chinese territory. And Tawang is only one of the places in it. We are claiming all of that. That is our position."

BJP was quick to denounce this undiplomatic statement of the Chinese ambassador. It reiterated the country's resolve that Arunachal Pradesh was an integral and inseparable part of India. The Chinese ambassador's claim put the UPA government in a very awkward position. Although government was quick to reiterate India's position, yet it failed to muster courage to call him to convey India's displeasure at his pronouncements, the way it did in the case of US Ambassador.

It is worth recalling that when US Ambassador had threatened India of some adverse consequences if the deal with USA was not honoured, UPA government was quick to summon him and convey its displeasure at his averments. The government had obviously felt handicapped in stretching its hands on Chinese ambassador because of the left parties which had refused to stand by the nation's

stand on the issue. This had provoked the BJP spokesman to challenge the CPM to choose between India and China.

Indian Ambassador called at dead of night

On the contrary, in the heat of Tibetan demonstrations against the atrocities committed on Tibetans, the Chinese Government did not wait for the next dawn and called India's Ambassador, who happens to be a lady, at the dead of night to register its protest against protests by Tibetans against China.

UPA sacrificed nation's diplomatic interests

The present Congress-led UPA seems to be committing the same blunders in understanding the Chinese intentions and dealing with the Chinese dragon, which Pandit Nehru did before the 1962 war with China. Like him, UPA too is trying to downplay Chinese snubs and overplaying its overt moves, which continues to be as treacherous as before 1962.

In a latest move the Chinese government refused visa to an IAS officer who, along with 106 others, was to go to China on some mid-career study tour. Giving their clarification Chinese authorities said, the person concerned does not require a visa because he is a citizen of China! And why he is a citizen of China? Because he belongs to Arunachal Pradesh and Arunachal Pradesh belongs to China! When hectic efforts to persuade them to issue the visa met with a firm no, the tour was called off. It is not the first time China has done so. Under the UPA rule China denied it to a former Chief Minister a couple of years ago and in April this year to three government officials and an MLA. These were not stray occurrences. Rather there was a common thread; all these persons are from Arunachal Pradesh.

In fact, at the very outset of its present incarnation China refused to accept the border with India because it was decided by the British colonial government (in 1914) and gave India that are Chinese territory. That is what they say. But in New Delhi it was loud silence. Because, for the Congress led UPA government, these are small matters.

CPM should choose between India and China

The double standards of Left parties are worth recalling. When US Ambassador took the liberty to state US government's position, the Left parties had taken affront to his statement and demanded his recall even. But when Chinese Ambassador took the umbrage to

state his country's position, they turned dumb, apologetic and condescending.

BJP President Shri Rajnath Singh and Leader of Opposition, Shri L. K. Advani also demanded that Parliament pass a resolution reiterating India's position. Although Foreign Minister, Shri Pranab Mukherjee, did emphasise that Arunachal Pradesh was integral part of India, yet the UPA government because of pulls from behind by the Left parties on whose support it is dependant for its survival, did not concede BJP's demand for a resolution by Parliament saying that India's position was clear. It is beyond comprehension what was the harm if Parliament had passed a resolution reiterating nation's resolve. "Let us not create a situation by unnecessarily heightening the tension", stated Shri Mukherjee trying to downplay the issue. "Let us allow the process to continue. As far as Arunachal Pradesh is concerned, I think I have made it quiet clear that it is a critical part of India and is going to remain so."

"Not a single senior member of the government" Shri LK Advani lamented in Parliament, "raised the issue with the Chinese Premier and neither was the Chinese Ambassador reprimanded by the government for his statement on Arunachal Pradesh."

Shri Pranab Mukherjee on December 14, 2006 accepted in Rajya Sabha that China was illegally in occupation of land in J&K, Arunachal Pradesh and said. "China is illegally occupying approximately 38,000 sq km in Jammu and Kashmir."

The Chinese Ambassador could take the liberty of saying so on the sacred soil of India because China knows that it has to deal with a very soft government which is incapable of taking a strong stand. After India stating the country's position Chinese Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Jiang Yu on December 3 did say in Beijing. "China's stand is clear and consistent on the Sino-Indian border issue. China is for seeking a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable solution to the issue, through friendly consultations" But a few days afterwards, the Chinese Ambassador contradicted Shri Mukherjee when on December 10 at Chandigarh he claimed that "some area" of the northeastern state of Arunachal Pradesh was being negotiated between the two countries".

"How can India possibly be negotiating a deal with China that involves bartering away even a portion of Arunachal in view of its stated position on the issue," asked strategic affairs analyst Brahma Chellaney. "If the Chinese envoy is making false claims, Beijing should be politely told to recall him," he added. But can the UPA

gather so much courage to demand it?

China intrudes into Arunachal?

BJP MPs Shri Tapir Gao and Shri Khiren Rijju from Arunachal have alleged that the Chinese army has intruded into 20 Km inside Indian territory at Sanchong-chu in Tawang district of the State. They said it was not an overnight development and demanded that the Centre should come out with a clarification as it was a serious matter.

They claimed that parts of Tawang valley and Subansiri district had been captured by China and alleged that the China refused to give visa even to the state's Chief Minister and Assembly Speaker.

The Arunachal Pradesh government has, however, dismissed the reports as "baseless" Though India has denied that China has occupied territory, West Arunachal MP Kiren Rijju has said he received word from the ministries of external affairs and defence that they were aware of China's inroads. Rijju said the areas under foreign occupation include the Sumdorong Chu valley, the Asapila and Lungar camps, large portions of grazing lands and other strategic points. A helipad in Sumdorong Chu is also under Chinese control. According to local MLA Lokam Tassar, the Chinese are now 20 km inside Taksin and have taken over several camps belonging to the Indian Army.

BJP has demanded that a joint parliamentary party should visit the spot to verify the situation, but UPA government has so far not taken any steps to clear the mist.

Chinese intrusions continue unabated

The UPA government is not taking the threat from China seriously. It seems to be repeating the blunders committed by late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

China has raised a high-tech infrastructure across the Indo-Tibetan border. Most modern roads, railways and airports have been constructed right on the last post of Tibet border. On the other hand, our airports and railways are hundreds of kilometres away from the border and the External Affairs admitted that Chinese infrastructure "is much superior to those on our side".

BJP has been the raising the issue of Chinese incursions, particularly around Arunachal Pradesh, time and again, but each time being denied by the UPA government. But on the eve of Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to China, External Affairs Minis-

ter Shri Pranab Mukherjee has on January 12, 2008 admitted that the Chinese forces "sometimes" intruded along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) on the border and added that 'there was no need for India to press any 'panic buttons' over the issue.

Defence Minister Shri A. K. Antony said: "Whenever there is any issue (intrusion), it is always taken up through the appropriate channels and that system is continuing".

A Defence Ministry report also admits that "there have been around 300 cases of intrusion of Chinese troops all along the 4,057 km LAC - right from east Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh to Joshimath in Utrakhand and Pangong Tso lake in Laddakh - over the last two years".

But, surprisingly and regrettably, nowhere do the Ministers for External Affairs and Defence say that whatever intrusions from Chinese side took place, the Chinese forces were made to retract and vacate the intrusions on Indian territory. Even when Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Arunachal Pradesh, China raised objection to the visit.

Prime Minister should take the people of the country into confidence and let them know as to on how much territory did the "around 300 cases of intrusion of Chinese troops" intruded and whether the "intrusion" was got vacated in each and every case.

140 incursions by China in one year

Not an "important topic of interest" for Sonia

Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi accompanied by heir apparent Shri Rahul Gandhi, in her own words, had a "very fruitful" and successful tour of China. "I had the opportunity and privilege to meet with the Chinese leadership and had very fruitful talks, exchanging views on a number of important topics of interest to the two countries," Smt. Gandhi said during a meeting with the Communist Party of China (CPC) Secretary of Shaanxi Province, Zhao Leji. True to its nature, China made some incursions into Indian territory. Is Chinese intrusion not one of the "important topics of interest to the two countries", she fails to explain.

But, according to the director-general of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police, Shri V.K. Joshi, Chinese troops had made at least 140 border incursions over the past one year, most of them in Jammu and Kashmir's Ladakh region and in Arunachal Pradesh.

On October 23 2007 Shri Joshi admitted at Delhi that the Chi-

nese soldiers guarding the border are better equipped than the ITBP personnel. He also said that the Centre is aware of the developments on the border and proposals have been sent to the government for enhancing the force's equipment and infrastructure. "The Chinese side is better equipped. It has better communication facilities and the advantage of the terrain. The geography on our side is not that favourable," Shri Joshi told reporters on the eve of the 46th Raising

One more snub from China

Refuses to issue visa to IAS officer

The present UPA government seems to be used to humiliation by China. On the eve of Chinese President's visit to India, the Chinese Ambassador to India had the cheek to declare that Arunachal Pradesh belonged to China.

China administered yet another sharp diplomatic snub to India on May 25 by refusing to issue a visa to Shri Gonesh Koyu, an IAS officer of the Arunachal Pradesh cadre who was travelling as part of a 107-strong delegation of IAS officers.

While 106 visas were issued, China claimed that as a "resident of China" no visa needed to be issued, to that Arunachal official, in an incident which has left MEA officials red-faced. This is the sixth official delegation during the tenure of the UPA government which has suffered such embarrassment.

The 107 IAS officers were set to leave on May 26 on a two-week trip to China as part of the training of officials of the level of joint secretary and were supposed to spend a week at the prestigious Beijing National Academy of Administration and a week in Shanghai. This was part of the "international exposure" capsule jointly designed by the Maxwell School of Public Administration, Syracuse, and IIM, Bangalore.

After China took a belligerent stand MEA officials rushed around till the last moment trying to make Chinese authorities issue the visa. The Chinese government refused to budge and MEA was forced to eat crow and cancel the trip.

It may be recalled that China's denial of a visa on the same grounds to Arunachal CM Shri Gegong Apang some years ago had led to an uproar in Parliament. Clearly, the MEA learnt no lessons and 107 IAS officers are a disappointed lot with their training a hostage to MEA's diplomacy.

On Tibet

UPA indulging in blatant appeasement of China

The use of indiscriminate violence by the Chinese armed forces to forcibly crush the voice of the people of Tibet is a serious development. The entire global community has begun to voice its apprehension about the manner in which force is being used against the protestors.

The anguish and suffering of Tibet and its people, eloquently expressed by His Holiness the Dalai Lama in pain imbued words, is a call to the conscience of all humanity.

In this context, it is indeed shameful to note that the Government of India, instead of expressing concern against the use of force by the Chinese government, is adopting a degrading policy of blatant appeasement towards China with scant regard to the country's national honour and foreign policy independence. Reports suggest that the Government of India has cancelled a proposed call by the Vice-President of India on His Holiness when he is expected to visit Delhi in the near future. Why is the government adopting such a nationally humiliating and pusillanimous policy full of indecision at the cost of neglecting the country's prestige? BJP has condemned this and expected the UPA to candidly explain to the country the rationale behind this policy of irrationality.

The illuminating thought and person of Lord Buddha, born in India and finding enlightenment here, has lent a unique kinship to the relations between India and Tibet. For centuries these relations are entirely spiritual in content and practice. Tibet is one of the important and last surviving repositories of the great thought and teachings of Lord Buddha and has for at least the last 13 centuries been the custodian of an important school of Buddhist thought. India cannot and must not disconnect with this invaluable and indeed unique spiritual linkage.

India must give voice to its concerns; correctly, unequivocally and unambiguously. This is not any interference. It is standing up, by India, for preserving that which is our own, and that which is India's contribution to all humanity - Tibet's Buddhist culture and civilization. This is our bounden duty and our very "Dharma".

Let us not forget that the "Chakra" which adorns independent India's flag, on cloth or engraved on stone is a Buddhist symbol of the "Dharma Chakra". How can we adopt the symbol but ignore the reality?

Under Chinese awe

Dalai Lama is "untouchable" for UPA

Being beholden to the Left parties for its survival, UPA Government has asked its officers not to attend any ceremony of Dalai Lama. "The feeling of untouchability towards spiritual leaders is not good," said Shri L. K. Advani.

Don't Simply Hope For The Best

Match Beijing Move For Move

The present Congress-led UPA seems to be committing the same blunders in understanding the Chinese intentions and dealing with the Chinese dragon, which Pandit Nehru did before the 1962 war with China. Like him, UPA too is trying to downplay Chinese snubs and overplaying its overt moves which continue to be as treacherous as before 1962.

Road to Everest a security threat to India

Reported reaction of UPA Government that China's effort to build a metalled road to Mount Everest is not a serious security concern clearly indicates UPA's unwillingness to face the situation in the right perspective. The road to Everest is not an isolated incident but part of a series of China's assertive actions across the border. Earlier, China's denial of visa to an IAS officer from Arunachal, further assertive claims on Arunachal, diversion of the Brahmaputra river through a tunnel, and trying to redefine the settled principle on the boundary dispute have serious security connotations. Construction of a 108-Km metalled road to the Mount Everest base camp at a height of 5,200 metres is not only an ecological disaster but also yet another attempt by China to assert itself from across the border.

Chinese efforts to divert the Brahmaputra river flow away from India has serious ramifications. The project envisages a series of 11 dams around the Brahmaputra loop. India can ignore these developments on India-Tibet border only at its peril.

■

Too many cooks (Economists) spoil the broth (economy)

UPA Government had promised more employment, eradication of poverty, keeping the prices down and accelerating the pace of economic reforms, but it has so far utterly failed to make any significant progress in any of these areas. The policy paralysis of Dr. Manmohan Singh and his team is leading to serious deterioration in the economic fundamentals. The unprecedented trade deficit of \$30 billion (Rs. 1,35,000 crores) has put pressure on the rupee.

Prices

Inflation rises to 7.83% Breaks 44 months' record

Aam aadmi cries aghast

Manmohan-Chidambaram relax, preach patience to people

"There is apprehension that there may be a campaign by our opponents on our management of inflation...We are confident of bringing the situation under control. Let there be no doubt on that score...I wish to assure you that price stability is one of the highest priorities of the government."

These are not the words of Finance Minister Shri P Chidambaram reassuring his restless Congress colleagues and the beleaguered *aam aadmi* in the context of inflation raging at 7.57%. These are the words of our Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh



at an AICC session in a speech was delivered on August 21, 2004, about three months after Congress was able to grab power after stitching an unholy post-election alliance.

At his first national press conference as PM on September 4, 2004, Dr. Manmohan Singh explained: "We have had drought...we have had to contend with steep rise of international petroleum prices...an overhang of excess liquidity has complicated our task."

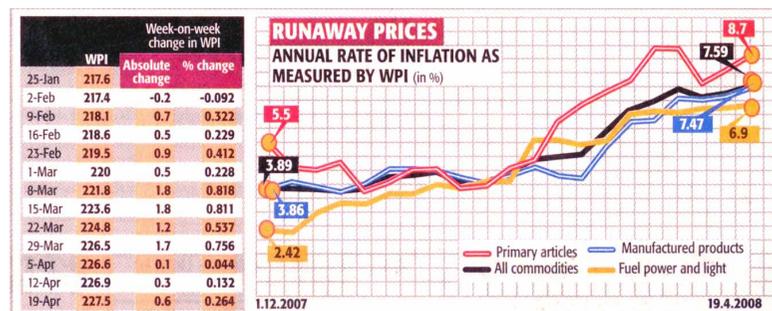
At one times, the Prime Minister had himself admitted that inflation is a tax on the poor. Almost four years in office, Dr. Manmohan Singh is still struggling with words instead of wielding the sword to kill the demon of rising prices.

Almost four years after assuming office, now in the last lap of his term as PM, Singh still finds himself grappling with a demon he had promised to slay.

Chidambaram sings the old tune

As the inflation touched 7.83, a beleaguered FMP. Chadambaram tuned in his old song which the people are fed up of hearing. On May 28, he declared: "Inflation will be tamed and contained. Our sympathies are with the people."

Why did he not tame and contain prices for the last four years, he doesn't explain. People know their "sympathies" are not going to work wonders for the sufferings they are going through because of the failure of the government.



Manmohan Proposes, CPM Disposes

The communist parties continue to cast their black shadow on the economic policies of UPA. Be it the disinvestment in PSUs, modernisation of airports, creation of Pension Fund Authority, restructuring of banking sector and consolidation of PSU banks, FDI in retail, EPF rate, WTO negotiations, we have the strange

spectacle of cabinet decisions being put in cold storage because of communist pressure and opposition. So much so that we witness everyday the pathetic spectacle of a helpless Prime Minister giving lectures on good economics but meekly surrendering to the back seat driving by communists. Reality is that Congress Party has never believed in economic reforms. It only wishes to promote a policy of Permit-and-Licence Raj to stifle enterprise and institutionalize corruption. It is today caught in a web of its own making.

This dichotomy between preaching and practice, the inability of the Central Government to continue economic reforms and unleash the hidden power of the people of India has seriously affected the national economy, harming India's image and the fight against poverty.

Due to the intransigence and overbearing influence of Left parties, UPA government has failed to implement its own decisions on disinvestments in PSUs like BHEL etc. This situation is creating apprehensions in the minds of foreign investors and having an adverse impact on the country's economy.

DMK threatens, Manmohan retraces

In July 2006 after a meeting of the Council of Ministers the Manmohan Government announced its decision to disinvest in Neyveli Lignite Corporation. This decision was taken when DMK ministers and Shri Lalu Yadav himself were present in the cabinet meeting. But the DMK chief and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister, Shri M. Karunanidhi put his foot down and threatened to pull down the government if the decision was not withdrawn. Meekly, the Prime Minister withdrew his own government's decision. Surprisingly, even Shri Lalu Prasad Yadav supported the stand of Shri Karunanidhi. Congress can go to any length to compromise to save its government.

FDI in retail to open gates of unemployment

UPA has decided to introduce FDI in retail sector – a step that will render the small-time trader and vendor jobless and make the life of ordinary trader miserable. According to preliminary estimates, the step will render jobless about 4 crore people already engaged in retail trade. This will expose UPA government's real intentions. It had promised to provide jobs to the jobless but this policy is going to render already employed as unemployed. BJP has decided to stoutly oppose this anti-people decision of UPA government which will

swell the ranks of unemployed by rendering even self-employed people as jobless.

A Sarkar for Khas Aadmi

Congress won whatever seats it could on the slogan “*Congress ka haath, aam aadmi ke saath*”. This slogan has proved to be a nightmare for the common man. *Aam aadmi* is the worst sufferer at the cruel *haath* of Congress Party. Rising prices and increasing shortages of essential commodities have made the life of common man miserable.

Congress has always been playing mischief with the voters. Since it came to power, numerous times has it raised the prices of petrol, diesel and cooking gas. The petrol which was available at Rs. 33 per litre in May 2004 is costing Rs. 47.70 in May 2008 to the consumer. So is the story with diesel and cooking gas. Price of diesel has gone up from Rs. 22 per litre to Rs. 32.50 and LPG from Rs. 244 per cylinder to Rs. 295.

Come Congress, come blackmarketing, hoarding

Congress and the curses of blackmarketing, hoarding, shortages and profiteering seem to be the inseparable Siamese twins. During NDA regime all these evils had vanished. But, like frogs during rainy season, the profiteers, hoarders and black marketers of essential commodities jump in action the moment Congress regimes take over. They have a field day and make a quick buck. During NDA regime cooking gas cylinders and LPG connections were available at much lower prices and that too on demand. So about new telephone connections. The moment UPA assumed power, all these essential commodities disappeared from open market. During the UPA rule prices of coal, sugar, tea, sarson oil, dal, milk, chillies, maida, fruits, vegetable, *chappal* etc. have gone up from 20 to 150 percent. (SEE CHART)

We have a Prime Minister who himself is an economist. So is his Finance Minister, P. C. Chidambaram and Deputy Chairman, Planning Commissioner, Dr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia. But the trio has let down the nation completely. The increasing cost of living is making it costlier to live and cheaper to die.

Neglecting poorerst of poor

The UPA may boast of being anything, but it certainly is anti-poor. The NDA government under the *Antyodaya Ann Yojna* had been giving 35 Kgs. of ration per month at a subsidised rate of Rs. 2 per Kg. for wheat and Rs. 3 for rice. But UPA government reduced it

to 20 KG. per month and raised its price.

Industrial growth slips down to 3% from 14.8%

The National Industrial growth, according to reports, has slipped to 3 per cent in March 2008 from 14.8 per cent in the corresponding month 2006 on account of widespread deceleration in sectors like manufacturing, mining and electricity, among others. Consumer goods sector, in addition to other segments of the industry like basic goods and capital goods, also witnessed a slowdown in growth during the months, showed the quick estimates of the Index of Industrial Production (IIP) data released in May 2008.

The fall in industrial output growth this time can be attributed mainly to the manufacturing sector growth rate, which decelerated to 8.4 per cent from 14.5 per cent in the corresponding period of the previous financial year. Mining and electricity sectors also performed badly during the month, recording growth rates of three per cent and 3.8 per cent respectively as compared to 6.1 per cent and 9.1 per cent in December 2006.

The cumulative industrial growth rate (April-December 2007) also slipped to 9 per cent from 11.2 per cent a year ago, suggesting that industrial growth rate during the financial year is unlikely to cross the double-digit mark. The nine-month growth rate for manufacturing sector declined to 9.6 per cent from 12.2 per cent in the previous fiscal. Similarly, the growth rates for mining and electricity sectors worked out to be 4.9 per cent and 6.6 per cent respectively, compared to 4.4 per cent and 7.5 per cent during the corresponding period of 2006-07.

Earlier the industrial growth rate for November 2007 has been revised downwards to 5.1 per cent from 5.3 per cent. The index for the consumer goods sector fell to 8.7 per cent during December 2007 as compared to 10.7 per cent a year ago. The growth rate of the consumer non-durables sector declined to 10.6 per cent from 13.5 per cent, while consumer durables segment demonstrated a marginal improvement to 2.2 per cent from 1.8 per cent in December 2006. The slippage was quite marked in case of basic goods with growth rate sharply declining to 3.1 per cent in December as compared to a high of 12.4 per cent a year ago

The cumulative growth figures (April-December 2007) suggest that output of consumer durables sector declined by 1.3 per cent as compared to a growth of 11.2 per cent during the corresponding period in the previous fiscal.

IMF says India's growth will decline to 7.9% in 2008

In the backdrop of the global financial turmoil, the IMF has projected that India's economic growth rate would slip to 7.9 per cent in 2008 from 9.2 per cent in the previous year. In 2009, the Indian economy will expand at slightly higher rate of 8 per cent, stated the IMF's World Economic Outlook, released in Washington. The report further said weak export demand and higher financing costs will dampen the growth of private investment, the key driver of growth.

Betrayal of Unemployed Youth

UPA's Common Minimum Programme had promised to "immediately enact a National Employment Guarantee Act" to provide "100 days of guaranteed employment to at least one able-bodied person in every rural, urban poor and lower middle-class household".

Employment Guarantee Act provides for an employment of 100 days at the rate of Rs. 60 per day in a year for the unemployed initially in only 200 districts leaving out more than 400 districts out of its purview. Can an average family with five members subsist on a mere income of Rs. 6,000 per annum? What will they do during the rest of the year? It is nothing but a cruel joke on the unemployed poor youth? Four crore educated unemployed living in urban areas have been denied even this benefit provided in the Act. Now the scheme has been extended to the whole of the country but adequate funds have not yet been released. Moreover there are complaints of widespread corruption and that is why government has been forced to order that payment would now be made through cheques.

'Bharat Nirman' hoax

Recently, Prime Minister announced the launch of what is billed as a new mega-development initiative for rural India. Called 'Bharat



Nirman', it is advertised to have an outlay of Rs. 1,73,000 crore over the next four years. The truth of the matter is that there is hardly anything new in the 'Bharat Nirman' initiative. It is nothing but a repackaging of the various ambitious projects and path-breaking initiatives launched by the NDA Government under a new name. Of late, people don't hear much about it.

Neglect of infrastructure development

Infrastructure development has clearly slowed down. The National Highway Development Programme is in utter neglect. So is the National Rail Vikas Yojana, which too was launched by the Vajpayee government. No worthwhile infrastructure project has been started in the last two years.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

The *Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana* launched by the Vajpayee government is the largest rural roads construction programme since Independence. Its implementation has considerably been slowed down under UPA. NDA Government had decided to accelerate the National Highway Development Programme to build 2,801 kilometres of roads. But in the last four years only about 500 kilometres have been added under the UPA Government.

The Golden Quadrilateral project to link the four metros with four/six lanes has been slowed down and being starved of necessary funds.

River-linking project abandoned

The ambitious scheme of inter-linking of rivers, like all other worthwhile schemes started by the NDA government, has been treated as a stepchild by this Government and because of political considerations has suffered for want of attention it deserved.

Dark clouds over power sector reforms

The power supply situation in the country continues to worsen each day while this Government debates the amendment to the Electricity Act.

Many prestigious projects discarded

Many ambitious projects launched for the benefit of the people at large, like the establishment of six AIIMS in the country, have been put on the back burner.

EPF rates lowered

During NDA regime the rate of interest on the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) was 9.5 percent. The Congress and Left parties had then been agitating for its being raised to 10.5 percent. But since they assumed power in 2004, they have further lowered this rate of interest to 8.5 percent. Another instance of hypocrisy and deception on the part of both the Congress and Left. During the last four years, it has done nothing to help the labour class in this connection.

Savings and Capital Markets

Savings in the economy are stagnant as real returns are not available even from long-term bank deposits. This is because the Government is crowding out other players and monopolizing all the savings in the economy. Time limits imposed by the Fiscal Responsibility Act are not being followed. This trend in the economy needs to be arrested and the Government should show better fiscal prudence. This alone can give people an incentive to save.

Basing its assessment on the rise in share prices, UPA Government keeps claiming that the markets are healthy. But the facts are otherwise. The stock market has now come totally under the influence of Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs). It is a matter of concern for every Indian.

More disturbing is the fact that even the Reserve Bank of India has warned of the dangers of the FII route being exploited by unscrupulous elements. This is happening in spite of the JPC on the last Stocks Scam recommending urgent measures to bar FIIs from being used as conduits for illegal funds. The share market is unpredictable with share prices soaring and crashing at will, turning the small investor into a broke.

PDS Bungling

It seems that our fears are unfortunately coming true regarding inadequate measures by the UPA Government in tackling present economic crisis. Ultimately Agriculture Minister Shri Sharad Pawar had to admit failure of the government to procure enough quantity of wheat and other staples for PDS and for creation of adequate buffer stock. On 17 April last year government was able to procure 56 lakh tones of wheat, which now stands abysmally low at 36 lakh tones this year. BJP wants to remind that even the quantity procured was not sufficient to feed the poor and hence imports were required after a gap of 8 years.

This year's procurement will increase dependence on high cost imports, which will create distortions of sorts where you pay more to the foreign farmers than Indian farmers.

The Food Minister, Shri Sharad Pawar, has in May 2008 announced that there is no need for food imports this year. This may only help speculators. Government need to maintain a buffer stock for any eventuality..

Housing Sector worst sufferer

Finance Minister Chidambaram's call to temper credit growth and moderate credit growth for realty sector is bound to affect the housing sector adversely. Already housing loan interest rates have zoomed from 6% during NDA regime to 12%, resulting in slum in loan demand as it has gone out of common man's reach. His call for keeping interest rates low for home loans upto 10 lakh is hollow if rates for provisioning are not reduced. The sector, which became the growth engine of employment and wealth generation besides providing much needed accommodation to millions stands already hit. FM's new diktat will only worsen the situation and will burden the common man more.

Indian growth story paradox

The great paradox of Indian growth story has come to the fore. It is an irony that on one hand the economy is growing at 9%, on the other hand essential commodity prices are rising by more than double the rate.

Connectivity

Realising that connectivity was very vital for all-round and rapid development of India, the NDA Government had embarked upon ambitious and time-bound programmes for building national highways (NHDP), the Rural roads programme- PMGSY. Their implementation has slowed down in most places. The development of ports and airports have also been pushed back due to policy confusion. This will seriously affect national development in the years to come.

Water Resources

The Common Minimum Programme promised that it would provide drinking water facility to every section of people in urban and rural areas on top priority. Unfortunately, the sad truth is that chronic water shortage continues to plague everywhere in the

country, the national capital included. National rivers worshipped by Indians all over the country have been converted into poisonous streams of water on account of bad governance. Dangerous phenomenon of arsenic pollution in the water leading to major health hazards is on the increase.

Ignoring threats of Global Warming

UPA government, as yet, seems to be sleeping over the threat of global warming. Government has not so far taken any steps to meet this disaster.

Energy Sector

The UPA Government has pushed the whole country into an area of darkness. The well-calibrated reforms of the power sector introduced by the NDA Government have been kept in abeyance by the UPA and the impact of this is for everyone to see. The performance of this crucial sector has been unsatisfactory as revealed by the latest Planning Commission statistics. Power generation remains stagnant even as its demand rises. The story in the field of production of oil and gas is no better and the dependence on imported oil is on the increase. The deplorable performance of the Energy sector will affect economic growth, employment and standard of living of the people.

National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme is National Rural Corruption Generation Scheme

In Manipur, a couple having NREGS job card, with high hopes sent their children to school with a promise to the school authorities that they would pay the fees after getting the wages from their jobs under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme. But due to rampant corruption, their dreams have been shattered as the authorities have failed to clear their wages after years of hang around, pushing them under sheer poverty and financial pressure. Now after these years of implementation this is the out come of NREGS and such type of stories from a cross section of the people are common.

UPA Chairperson Smt Sonia Gandhi and the Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had described the NREGS as the “most revolutionary step” towards the eradication of poverty and unemployment. But the present picture is not that much rosy and far away from satisfaction of even the Congress party and UPA partners. During this period applicants have not been given job card. Villagers are discriminated against on the basis of caste, sex, religion and

party affiliation.

The number of applications received and the job cards issued exceeds the total number of households in States like Maharashtra and West Bengal. The entries in the job cards and muster rolls are fictitious and hundreds of thousands are neither getting work nor unemployment allowance. But if it has achieved anything, it is in generating corruption instead of employment.

In 2007 a survey of 14 States (mainly ruled by UPA) revealed that 94 per cent of the households did not get the stipulated 100 days of minimum work or no work at all. This scenario reveals that the scheme has turned out to be yet another hollow public programme of UPA, long on promises and short on its impact. Despite the aberrations and ambiguities, the scheme has not given any succour to the poor.

The scheme is actually a refashioned version of earlier wage employment schemes, particularly SGRY and the food-for-work programme launched successfully during the time of NDA. So a modified and ill-intended scheme, neither intends to nor is capable of redressing the structural causes of poverty.

So in the end, like all hallow promises and pro-poor policies of Congress, this NREGS will ultimately end up increasing the number of poor and deepening poverty.



Betrayal of farmers

Agriculture neglected

About 70 percent of India's population is dependent upon agriculture. It is the Kissan who feeds the country. It is he who has brought the country out of the unfortunate abyss of perennial food shortages when every now and then our ministers were visiting foreign lands with a begging bowl for the alms of food grains. It is his zeal and labour that turned the nation self-sufficient in food production and made it raise its head with pride. He is our hero who ushered in the Green and White Revolutions in the country. But today he himself is in distress. Agriculture was once a thriving and respectable vocation. It has now become a source of curse for those engaged in it. Kissan today is a miserable being himself. He is unable to make both ends meet. Not to speak of feeding the nation, he is unable to feed his own family. He is under a burden of debt unbearable for him. He is unable to redeem his debts. The situation has worsened to such an extent that about 25,000 kissans have been forced to commit suicides during the last some years.

The malady lies deep and the Congress has failed to fathom and diagnose it. For unexplained reasons the UPA government has not released any economic package for the benefit of farmers in other States.

It is ironical that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh issued a call to them to usher in the Second Green Revolution in the country. How ironical the call appears in the present situation!

The prosperity of the nation is interwoven with that of the farmers. As long as the kisan was happy and contented, there was a

regime of surpluses in food grains. During its rule NDA was faced with the problem of plenty and was hard put to make arrangements for proper storage of the food grains. In just less than 15 months, the country under UPA was been thrown to the position of food shortages with food production having gone down. The Government had to import wheat at exorbitant rates from Australia and other countries at rates much higher than given to Indian farmers.

NDA had constituted a National Farmers Commission which has since submitted its report to the Prime Minister. The Commission is reported to have made many constructive and useful suggestions. BJP President Shri Rajnath Singh wrote to the Prime Minister suggesting that he convene an all-party meeting to consider the Commission recommendations so that a comprehensive policy could be formulated with a national consensus. But the Prime Minister has yet to do anything in the matter although more than six months have elapsed in between.

Rural Credit sector lifeless

Rural credit structure remains lifeless and the delivery mechanism of cooperatives and rural banks as also the *kisan* credit cards are not being used effectively by the UPA Government to deliver credit in time and adequate to the requirement of farmers.

Several studies by the Planning Commission have highlighted the need to create a national market for food grains so that farmers can get remunerative prices for their produce. It is a matter of regret that there is little headway in this direction. This, coupled with the woeful lack of storage facilities, has led to untold misery for farmers and made the wastage of agricultural products a national shame.

It is unfortunate that in the WTO negotiations, the UPA representatives have been able to achieve very little in terms of getting our farmers better access to global markets. They have also been unable to strengthen the protection that our marginal farmers require from the Government against the onslaught of subsidised imports.

Treachery with Kisans

It is the plight of the kisans under the UPA rule which is a matter of great concern. More than eight thousand farmers have committed suicide in various parts of the country, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, since the UPA government came to power. According to latest reports, on an average 10 farmers are committing suicides every day in the country. The reason mainly is that farmers have not been able to pay back their loans.

UPA claims to be the well-wisher of farmers. It made tall promises to them during elections. But during the last four years it has done nothing to ameliorate their lot with the result that farmers' suicides are continuing at an accelerated pace.

The Rs. 50,000 crore Jayaprakash Narayan Rural Credit Fund launched by NDA for the benefit of rural people has been scuttled by UPA government.

Kissan Channel of Doordarshan started by NDA government to help farmers has been terminated.

Budget outlay for schemes for the benefit of farmers and rural development has been slashed.

PM's hoax of a Package

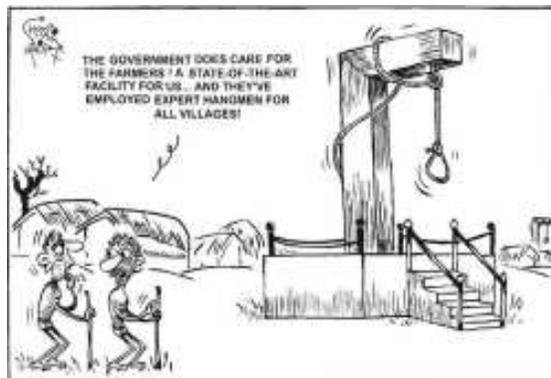
On 1st July, 2006 Prime Minister Shri Manmohan Singh visited the farmer's graveyard, that is, Vidarbha region in Maharashtra and declared a special package of some Rs. 2500 crores giving interest waiver and rescheduling of loans. Yet suicides continued unabated. PM's package failed completely. This has happened because government is not hitting the main cause of agrarian crisis.

Loan waiver

"worst affected farmers rendered ineligible"

Nothing to increase income of farmers

In the Union Budget 2008-09 the Finance Minister announced a Rs. 60,000 crore loan-waiver plan for the farmers under debt. While no provision was made initially, later only Rs. 30,000 has been provided. This is insufficient. UPA tried to make a great media hype. This has once again proved to be hollow. The farmers still don't feel convinced of the honesty of UPA's intentions and that is why suicides by farmers continue as before even after announcement in the budget.



An expert in the field, Shri P. Sainath, has methodically demolished the "historical and unprecedented" Union budgetary farmer loan waiver stating that the worst affected farmers were rendered ineligible as they possessed more than the stipulated two hectare land holdings.

"In Vidharbha, over 50 per cent of land holdings are over 7.5 acres [around 3 hectares] and of the remaining 50 per cent, 25 per cent have restricted access to banks. There is nothing in the budget that increases the income of farmers or stabilises prices," he said.

He said over 1.5 lakh farmers had committed suicide in the past five years.

A farmer killed himself every 30 minutes and the number of such suicides had increased from 15,000 a year between 1997 and 2001 to 17,000 a year in the 2002-06 period.

"Just like each case of child labour has a personal history behind it, every farmer suicide had a multiplicity of causes. But the larger canvas or backdrop that leads to such suicides is common and stems from certain undeniable causes."

Enumerating these causative factors, Shri Sainath said there had been a transfer of funds from the poor to the rich, an unprecedented growth of the corporate sector and gross undermining of local sovereignty and governance.

"Farming has been rendered so unviable at the small-scale level that there are not many takers for it and the relentless drive towards corporate farming has just hastened the demise of the small farm not just in India but the world over," said the eminent journalist.

Profit margins declining for farmers growing foodgrains

The cereals and pulses on your dining table are steadily costing more, but is the farmer making more profits out of growing them? The answer, experts say, is no. The grim truth, according to a Times of India report, is that profit margins for farmers growing foodgrains are declining in many parts of the country.

"The net returns out of growing foodgrains are shrinking in most of the major high-yield states like Punjab, Haryana and Andhra Pradesh. The trend is clear if you look at the farm costs and prices data," says Ramesh Chand, Professor at the National Centre for Agricultural Economic and Policy Research. "Though growing grain is still profitable, the incomes are definitely coming down," he adds.

This is particularly true for the small farmers. As RS Seshadri of top food brand, Tilda Riceland, puts it, "Farming at today's prices is becoming unviable for the small and marginal grower. It calls for quick steps to ensure farmers remain interested in agriculture."

One immediate measure to redress the situation is obvious: raise the minimum support price for foodgrains.

Declining profitability is one of the reasons for stagnation in domestic foodgrain production in the past decade or so. It's also linked up with increasing distress in the countryside. A look at the figures on indebtedness of farmers shows high debts in states where farming is developed - and where lower profitability is an issue.

The National Sample Survey data for farmer indebtedness shows that a shocking 82% of farming households in Andhra Pradesh was in debt in 2003. The high figure for AP was perhaps linked to uncertainties in cash crops like cotton, but indebtedness was high in foodgrain-producing granaries like Punjab and Haryana as well - 65.4% and 53.1% as compared with the national average of 48.6%.

Experts blame government policies for the declining net returns for farmers. For instance, free power has meant that farmers have indiscriminately used ground water, leading to a sharp drop in water tables. Now they have to dig deeper to find water, adding to their input costs. Soil fertility has dropped because some fertilizers were subsidized more than others, leading to skewed use patterns. As a result, more fertilizers are needed to maintain yield levels.

Then there's fragmentation of land. Says Ashok K Gulati, Asia Director at the International Food Policy Research Institute, "The average land holding in 1971 was 2.3 hectares.

It had declined to 1.3 hectares by 2001-02 and currently stands at around 1 hectare. It's difficult to maintain profitability in small holdings." Thus, even as you pay through your nose to keep your family fed, the farmer is no better off than he ever was".

Wheat imports hurt Kisans

The decision to import wheat has been taken just to hurt the kisans. In May 2006 the price of wheat being given to Indian farmer was put at Rs 650 per quintal while the price of the imported wheat has been fixed at Rs 950 per quintal. It smacks of a major scam.

Government had granted licence to several multinational companies to import wheat. These companies purchased wheat from Indian farmers at lower prices and exported that to Bangladesh and other countries making a huge profit. The reason for major price

hike of wheat in India was purchase by multinational companies. Interests of Indian farmers were compromised and hit adversely.

Crocodile tears on FTA

It was strange that on the one hand, UPA was patting its back on the India-Asean Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and, on the other, to win undeserved sympathy of the farmers adversely affected by the Government policies, Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi had written to the Prime Minister to "very carefully scrutinise" India-Asean FTA to safeguard interests of domestic farmers.

The UPA government had failed to provide rural institutional credit to farmers. Going in for free trade is meaningless if the trade is not free within the country itself and problem of failing agricultural economy is not addressed immediately. Majority of the suicide victims were cotton growers because of lowering of import duty and import of cheaper cotton from USA and UK, where its production was highly subsidised.



Centre-State relations

Bad to worse

By its actions the UPA government during the last four years has shown that it does not believe in federalism. It has openly indulged in discriminatory treatment against non-Congress, non-UPA state governments, especially those run by the NDA. Shri Narendra Modi has been acknowledged as the most accomplished Chief Minister of the country by numerous prestigious non-government organizations, including *INDIA TODAY* and Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. A leading IT magazine has awarded the Dataquest E-Governance Award 2006 to Gujarat. Yet UPA loses no opportunity to harass the BJP government on the flimsiest of excuses and thereby hindering the State's march to progress.

Similar is the case with Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh States. All these States are performing exceptionally well. Rajasthan has topped in various welfare projects, including implementation of Employment Guarantee Act. Chhattisgarh has established new milestones in development. But all these States are being starved of funds for development, solely on narrow political considerations.

Central Budget discriminates against BJP/NDA-ruled States

Finance Minister Shri P. C. Chidambaram's 'populous' budget with an eye on the impending elections to four State assemblies and then to Lok Sabha if not in 2008 itself, in 2009 has unashamedly discriminated against the NDA and BJP-ruled States. It looks as if the UPA, and particularly Congress, does not need the votes of the people in these States.

Injustice to Gujarat

Gujarat Chief Minister Shri Narendra Modi has criticized the Union Budget saying that the budget has done "injustice to Gujarat by not announcing anything for development of state's technical education, despite Gujarat having potential of skilled manpower and has been on top in human resources development."

Himachal ignored

Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Prof. Prem Kumar Dhumal accused the Congress-led UPA government at the Centre of meting out step-motherly treatment to the state despite the fact it eased out power shortage and contributed to turning deserts of Rajasthan into fertile land and its jawans made supreme sacrifices for the country in protecting the territorial integrity of the country and in fighting terrorism. "The Central Government has backed out from its commitments made by Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram himself on the occasion of the birthday of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi," he added.

He added finance minister P. Chidambaram himself had announced the opening of an IIT and a Central university on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi in Shimla last year, but he did not make any such provision in the recently presented Budget. He had made that statement on behalf of the Prime Minister.

Step-motherly treatment to Uttarakhand

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Maj Gen BC Khanduri has charged the Congress of adopting step-motherly treatment towards BJP ruled States. He said the issue of construction of six new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences sanctioned by the earlier NDA Government has been put in cold storage.

On Backward Region Grant fund, he said the Budget clearly envisages for spending of 45 per cent of this fund for the States of Orissa, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. He said it was strange that a backward State like Uttarakhand has been left out. The Chief Minister also raised the issue of excise concessions for newly set up industries of Uttarakhand. "The UPA Government is providing these excise concessions to the new industries till 2010, which should be increased to the 2013 limit as initially planned," he said.

Budget victimises Bihar

Bihar Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar described the budget 'discriminatory towards Bihar' saying the budget hardly had anything to boast about as far as Bihar was concerned. "There is no special package for Bihar nor any attempt has been made to extricate Bihar from its poor economic predicament,"

UPA budget has a communal tinge

Shielding behind the politically correct jargon of "inclusive growth," Finance Minister P Chidambaram has come out with a

slew of "appeasement" measures in his Budget.

Doubling the allocation of the Ministry of Minority Welfare from Rs 500 crore in 2007-08 to Rs 1,000 crore in 2008-09, the only department to have registered a 100 per cent increase in plan outlay, Chidambaram announced drawing up a multi-sectoral development plan exclusively for each of the 90 minority concentration districts at a cost of Rs 3,780 crore.

He announced a pre-metric scholarship scheme with an allocation of Rs 80 crore from next year. Another Rs 45.45 crore has been approved for modernising madarsa education from the next fiscal. Shri Chidambaram said: Until December last year, 256 branches of public sector banks have been opened in places where there are substantial minority population. At least, 288 more will be opened by end of this fiscal and many more in 2008-09. Continuing the exercise started this year, the Government has decided to recruit more candidates belonging to the minority communities to the Central paramilitary forces in the coming fiscal. Says Leader of the Opposition (Lok Sabha) Shri LK Advani: "I am surprised at the heavy communal overtones of the Budget as it was a throw back to the Liaqat Ali days, the consequences of which are well-known."

The Budget also proposes to set up Development and Finance Corporation for what it calls the "disadvantaged groups" by contributing additional equity of Rs 75 crore for minorities and another 50 crore of Scheduled Tribes.

Railway Budget - a failed pride

In the Rajya Sabha on the Railway Budget, Deputy Leader of BJP Parliamentary Party, Smt. Sushma Swaraj tore apart Lalu's Rail Budget with convincing fact and figures. "You are like the magician who produces money from thin air but at the end of the show goes around holding a begging bowl to ask money from the spectators," she said. She asked if the Railways was making huge profits to the tune of Rs. 25,000 crore, why was Shri Lalu asking for money from the Government.

Regarding Lalu's assertions of not increasing the rail fares, Smt Swaraj said he had increased the fares in a veiled manner and by executive orders, even without taking Parliament into confidence. "You have put 30 percent seats in Tatkal scheme for which the passengers have to give Rs 100 to Rs 300 per seat," she said, adding that earlier the rates were Rs. 50 to Rs 100 and only for 10 percent of seats

and up to 24 hours in advance. "Lalu has provided this scheme for five days in advance just to accrue more money from the pocket of the passengers". She alleged that 80 percent of the trains have been renamed as superfast just to increase the fare. She even said that the charges of cancellation have been increased and in case of buying return or onward journey ticket, an extra of Rs 25 are being charged. "How can you say that you did not increase the fares," Smt Swaraj asked. She claimed that freight rates had also been increased by seven percent per year, even in case of fertilizers and food products.

False claims

Bihar Chief Minister Shri Nitish Kumar punctured Shri Lalu's tall claims by saying that when the entire economy was growing at a rate of 8.5-9%. Railway Minister felt proud to claim a growth-rate of 8% for the railways. Citing the cash surplus figures of Rs 25,000 crore in the rail budget, Bihar CM wanted to know what was the quantum of investible surplus. "And if the railways has so much of surplus, what was the need for seeking budgetary support from the union finance ministry?"

Fare cut just an eyewash

BJP dismissed fare reductions, the high-point of the rail budget, as 'an eyewash', and said its provisions had come as a huge disappointment for people from most states.

Deputy Leader of BJP Parliamentary Party in Lok Sabha, Prof. V. K. Malhotra said: "The rail budget presented by Mr Lalu Prasad Yadav is disappointing. Members from various states created a ruckus and staged a walkout, which shows that the hopes of all the States had turned into a big disappointment."

Calling the across-the-board reduction in fares as 'an eyewash,' Shri Malhotra claimed that passenger expenses would go up through increase in charges for food, reservation, cancellation and other amenities. Shri Malhotra alleged that "People are being cheated. Passenger trains are being redesignated as superfast trains. The coaches would remain the same, but the fares would go up."

"This is nothing but jaadu-tona (trickery). People cannot see, but they will have to cough up more now. Never before has so much burden been put on the people," he contended. "The condition of railway stations has deteriorated in the last four years. There is no cleanliness, no drinking water. The condition of toilets is bad and there is talk of making our stations world-class," Shri Malhotra remarked caustically.



Foreign Policy in shambles

Supine, directionless UPA

Sacrificing nation's security and diplomatic interests

The UPA government's performance under the weakest government the country has had since Independence becomes worse day by day. The Prime Minister has been in a surrender mode both at home and abroad on vital issues of national interest. Survival in office has been his sole mantra. The weakness and paralysis in decision making that are his hallmark are evident in foreign policy as much as in other spheres. His record of four years is littered with one failure after another on all fronts.

These repeated failures have damaged the credibility of our country and gravely compromised its security. The country's strategic space enlarged significantly under the NDA Government has shrivelled disastrously during the UPA and this Prime Minister's watch.

Indo-US nuclear deal

Mortgaging national interests with US

The Act passed by the US legislature leaves no one in doubt that the purpose of the deal is to impose on India, bilaterally, conditionalities which are worse than those incorporated in the NPT and the CTBT, in perpetuity and without an exit clause. The fact is that ever since July 2005, the US has been shifting the goalposts and the Government of India has not only been acquiescing in it, but adopting them as the latest benchmark.

The deal is more unequal than ever before. The principle of parity, on which the Prime Minister had placed so much emphasis, stands abandoned. Reciprocity and sequencing of the various steps, again something on which the Prime Minister had placed so much emphasis, have been given a go by.

Worse, in spite of the assurances of the Prime Minister to Parliament, the US Act seriously compromises the independence of our foreign policy. India is not just to toe the line of the US in regard to

Iran, it is being afforded this cooperation on the ground, among others, that its foreign policy will be "congruent" with that of the US.

Furthermore, the Act aims at capping, rolling back and eventually eliminating India's nuclear weapons capability. There is an absolute ban on further tests – including sub-critical tests and those for peaceful purposes. This will completely stymie India's technical advancement in this vital sphere. By going in for agreement under this legislation, the Government is binding India's future – in security as well as technical advancement.

It should be noted that nuclear scientists have, by and large, opposed the deal and its intrusive and restrictive provisions.

Is the Deal dead or live?

It is very difficult to say whether the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Deal is dead or alive. While Manmohan government and the Congress continue to reiterate they are going ahead with the deal and the negotiations are on, the Left Parties are opposing it tooth and nail and threatening that the Deal may cost UPA the government. UPA has constituted a committee which meets every now and then and then deciding to meet again without any results. For the past over six months both the UPA and the Left parties are only keeping the people guessing what is brewing between themselves.

Indo-US relations

The Clinton administration first recognized India as a "natural ally" and therefore, wanted an integrated approach on issues of 'strategic' policy. The NSSP, announced by the NDA Government in January 2004, aimed at increasing cooperation in civil-nuclear activities, civilian space programmes, high technology, trade and missile defence. The issues covered as important landmarks in Indo-US relations in year 2005 were already in place when the NDA Government had earlier engaged the United States. The central point of NDA Government's policy was gradual improvement in Indo-US relations, keeping in mind the convergence as well as the contradictions in policies of the two countries.

UPA's lack of understanding in dealing with US is worrying. With the UPA Government's obsequious policies, there is every apprehension of Indo-US relations slipping in to an 'asymmetry', thus damaging the long term prospects of friendship and cooperation between the two countries. The UPA Government has clearly not comprehended the abhorrence of the people of India to a subservient relationship with the United States.

Siachen

The Indian Army is not averse to vacating the Actual Ground Position Line (AGPL), if the nation so desires, but wants that what it secured with great effort and numerous sacrifices, and which it has held safely for the nation in the face of enemy action, as well as the severity of the climate and the treacherous terrain, for the last 22 years, should not be sacrificed at the altar of expediency, merely to notch up one more CBM (confidence building measure) towards the ephemeral peace process.

It is well known that the Indian Army has made immense sacrifices first to gain and thereafter to secure control of this strategic area in the north of the Line of Control (LoC) since 1984. All attempts by Pakistan in the past 23 years to dislodge the Indian troops from Siachen have been frustrated by the brave Indian troops. The government must not gift away on the diplomatic table what our soldiers have fought hard to gain on the battlefield.

Indeed, Siachen itself is a legacy of the Shimla Agreement, which converted the Ceasefire Line after the 1971 Indo-Pak war into the Line of Control.

Any settlement on Siachen should be guided by a sound strategic consideration of India's security and overall national interests without succumbing to any external pressure.

Suffice to say that in our quest for a *modus vivendi* with Pakistan we should not land in situations where we would regret, at a later stage, if the peace process goes sour or does not give us the results we are looking for.

Certain factors need to be in place. One, there must be "confirmation of the AGPL as the defining line." Two, India must get a commitment from Pakistan against reoccupation of the Siachen heights. Three, the extent of troop reduction/withdrawal must ensure no terrain advantage to Pakistan leading to any surreptitious reoccupation. Four, there should be a time-schedule for an agreement on environmental and ecological cleaning up of the glaciers with each country cleaning up the mess made by it.

Bangladesh

The Government has been equally inept in dealing with Bangladesh. Infiltration and illegal immigration from Bangladesh goes on unchecked. Pakistan's ISI finds Bangladesh a safe haven for its activities. The Government of India has failed to deal with the situation with determination.

UPA Government lacks a policy to deal with the Bangladesh Government which continues to export terrorists to India and also shelter Indian terrorists on its soil. It has numerous times picked up India's Border Security Force officials, beaten and even killed them brutally, but UPA has only made conciliatory noises.

The main cause of our troubles is that UPA is not dealing this problem from the angle of national interest, but confining it how best can it derive political and electoral benefit.

The terrorist organisations, like HUUJ, and other anti-India elements continued to operate from Bangladesh and are well entrenched there. UPA has failed to effectively take up the matter with Bangladesh government to check their activities.

Nepal

Through its persistent and disastrous ostrich-like inaction, and by outsourcing of its policy on Nepal to the CPM, the Government has seriously jeopardised our national interests.

The BJP welcomes the restoration of democracy in Nepal, the holding of elections to a new Constituent Assembly and the expression of popular will in these elections. India and Nepal have from the very earliest days had civilizational, religious and cultural links. We have a long history of continuous friendship with the people of Nepal. We have cooperated with each other closely to promote our mutual interests. This principle of advancing our mutual interests must continue to guide our relationship in future also.

The BJP is concerned, however, about the track record of the Maoists who have staked their claim to power in Nepal. Attacks in the past by them on Indians and Indian interests in Nepal; their leaders' open warning to India after the elections; their pre-emptive and unilateral pronouncements on issues, which must necessarily be settled by the newly elected Constituent Assembly according to the law of the land; the violation of Indian borders by their cadres, and their readiness to take to the streets to force the acceptance of their demands give cause for concern.

No one can fail to notice that, in spite of intimidation during polling, 70 percent of the people have voted for parties other than the Maoists. We hope that the future Government of Nepal will abide by the norms of multiparty democracy that it will work to strengthen democratic institutions. We also hope that the integrity and effectiveness of an institution vital to Nepal's future and the security of the region – the Nepal Army for instance – will not be compro-

mised or impaired in any manner.,

The present situation is delicately balanced. The BJP hopes that somewhere in our government perhaps, there still remains the needed skill, Statecraft and statesmanship, so essential today for ensuring that the vital and enduring interests of the people of Nepal are not jeopardised, and that Indo-Nepalese relations, ties and co-operation are further strengthened. The first step obviously must be for the Government of India to take back the conduct of our policy towards Nepal from the ones to whom it has outsourced it.

Tibet

We are deeply disappointed at the craven manner in which the Government of India has dealt with the recent tragedy in Tibet. As on other issues, here also the Government's sole concern has been to please China abroad and to placate the CPM at home. Once again the CPM in particular and the Left

Parties in general, have been completely exposed on the issue of Tibet: little can be more ridiculous than to compare China's deeds and status in Tibet with the situation in Jammu and Kashmir. Their attitude, however, has been along expected lines. What causes far greater distress is the complete surrender of the Government of India on this issue.

China has been making a series of unfriendly, statements and gestures towards India in recent months. Its claim, repeated again and again, on Arunachal Pradesh is symptomatic. Yet, the Government of India has not shown the courage to rebut it with convincing firmness. The Chinese Foreign Office snubs India by summoning our Ambassador at 2 o'clock in the morning; in India we give the Chinese Ambassador access to the highest quarters in Government to instruct us on how the Olympic torch should be protected in India. As a result, almost 20,000 security personnel are deployed; Government offices are closed; the Metro is shut down. Even the Parliament of India, the symbol of our sovereignty, is quarantined. All this, just to ensure that China does not find cause to take offence. This is shaming capitulation, not any careful conduct of international affairs.

Instead of telling the Chinese that their colonisation of Tibet amounts to the crushing of an entire people and civilisation, representatives of the Government of India lecture the Dalai Lama on how he should behave in India. It is shameful that the Government stops its functionaries from sharing a non-political platform with

the Dalai Lama even after they had accepted to do so, and all for fear of annoying China.

The BJP demands that the Government of India come out clearly on the side of the people of Tibet in this hour of oppression. China must adhere to the principle of autonomy for Tibet which it has promised to the people of Tibet in its Constitution: the contrast between what it allows the Han- dominated Hong Kong and Macao – areas in regard to which it speaks of 'One country, two systems' – and what it is doing in Tibet is for all to see. The religious and cultural rights of the people of Tibet must be fully protected. India must not remain a mute spectator to the destruction of

Tibet's cultural and religious heritage, nor to the plight of its people as they are systematically reduced to a minority in Tibet itself.

We must remember that what is done to and in Tibet directly affects the security of India, as well as the civilization heritage of all humanity.

Accordingly, the Government of India must work with friends and allies to highlight the plight of the Tibetan people at the UN and other related forums. It should stop conducting the foreign policy of the country on the basis of fear.

The people of our country, on the other hand, must see how the vital security and diplomatic interests of our country are being sacrificed by this supine and directionless Government, and thus gird themselves to very soon replace it.

India and UN Security Council Reforms

On the question of India's permanent membership of the UN Security Council, the Government has been sending contradictory signals. It made a statement in Parliament that there was no question of accepting permanent membership without veto power. Thereafter, the Government of India appears to have changed its stand and seems to be preparing for a compromise on this issue. Nobody is taken into confidence. Such serious international issues are being dealt with in a casual manner. At the moment Government seems to have forgotten the matter altogether.

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It's Internal insecurity Terror reigns supreme

Aam aadmi's life insecure

UPA lacks the will to fight terror

It is no exaggeration to say that since the day UPA took office, it has only tried to concentrate itself on continuing in office. If it had to sacrifice the interests of the nation and of the common people it has never winked even for a while. This is more true when it comes to the matter of protecting the life and property of the common man. Never were the terrorists so bold, fearless and their morale so high as during the UPA regime and never were the police, army and paramilitary forces so demoralized as they are today.

Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi are on record having said that no single community should be seen with the eye of suspicion in the matter of terrorism. That is true, but when people of a particular community are mostly seen involved helping Pakistan and other anti-national elements in achieving their terror designs such people have to be brought to book. The country has lost about 90,000 innocent men, women and children at the hands of terror while only about 8000 brave men were lost who sacrificed their precious lives defending the sacred soil of the country against aggression by Pakistan and China.

It is also a matter of shame that terrorist struck at will in Delhi, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Ajmer, Mumbai Train Blasts, Varanasi, Ayodhya, Rampur CRPF Camp and more recently in Jaipur. The UPA government failed to bring the culprits to justice during the last four years. When terrorists struck during NDA regime or in NDA ruled States, they were hauled up and many were convicted and sentenced. But UPA failed despite the fact that it entrusted the inves-

tigation in many cases to CBI. That shows the honesty and sincerity of this government to fight against terror and terrorists elements.

Internal security threatened

The greatest failure of UPA has been on the internal security front. For narrow political and electoral considerations, it repealed POTA without evolving an effective mechanism to face the rising threat of cross-border terrorism, Naxalite/Maoist activities and divisive forces. As a result the terrorist organizations have felt emboldened to kill 63 and injuring more than 200 innocent men, women and children in Diwali eve blasts in the nation's capital. It is a pity that even after one year no real headway seems to have been made in catching hold of the real culprits so far, although a case has been filed against some people.

Nation's IT capital Bangalore was also the target of a terrorist attack in which one renowned IT professor was killed. The terrorists also attacked the Ram Mandir complex in Ayodhya and Sankatmochan temple in Varanasi.

Mumbai serial blasts

At least 200 people were killed and another 625 people injured in seven serial bomb blasts targetting the railway networks in Mumbai in the first class compartments of trains at Mira Bayandhar, Jogeshwari, Mahim, Santa Cruz, Khar, Matunga and Borivli stations on the Western Railways on July 11, 2006. Even after two years, the matter still remains under investigation.

Malegaon bomb blasts

Just after two months, the terrorists struck again in Maharashtra and this time at Malegaon in Nasik district on September 8. In three bomb explosions forty innocent people were killed and 65 injured.

Because of Smt. Sonia Gandhi and Dr. Manmohan Singh's sermon to the Maharashtra police not to target one particular minority for such incidents, not much headway has so far been made in bringing the culprits to book. The investigation has now been entrusted to CBI and is moving at a snail's pace.

Siliguri and Guwahati blasts

Terrorists struck again and in a bomb blast inside a compartment of the Haldibari-Siliguri Passenger train at Belacoba station in West Bengal's Jalpaiguri district. The death toll was 10 innocent people and another 50 injured.

On November 23, 3 people were killed and another nine injured

when a bomb went off outside the Guwahati railway station in Assam.

AND NOW, TERRORISTS STRIKE IN JAIPUR

A series of powerful bomb blasts tore through the Pink City of Jaipur on May 13, 2008, killing at least 80 people and injuring over 200 in a devastating terrorist strike. This is the first such attack on Rajasthan's capital city. It appeared that Hawa Mahal, the landmark of Jaipur, and the temples in this 300-year old city, were the main targets of the terrorists. Blast sites appeared to have been carefully chosen to inflict huge casualties near the Hanuman temple where devotees offer special prayers on Tuesday

To security analysts the Pakistani hand seems evident. The one common link between the Jaipur blasts, last year's triple strikes in Uttar Pradesh and the Malegaon attack was the use of bicycles. In all these incidents, bombs were strapped on to cycles. SIMI was behind the Malegaon attack and HUI carried out the UP court blasts. The Intelligence Bureau (IB) was caught napping despite Ajmer wake-up call. There was no input on an anticipatory strike even though two blasts rocked Ajmer Sharif last October.

Terror Attacks

January 2008: Terrorist attack on CRPF camp in Rampur kills eight

November 2007: Serial blasts in civil courts of Varanasi and Faizabad 13 killed, 40 injured

October 2007: Two killed in a blast inside Ajmer Sharif shrine in Rajasthan during Ramzan

August 2007: 42 dead, 60 injured in Hyderabad terror strike

May 2007: A bomb at Mecca mosque in Hyderabad kills 11

February 19, 2007: Two bombs explode aboard a train, on way from India to Pakistan, burning to death at least 68 passengers and 125 injured.

September 2006: 38 dead and 100 hurt in twin blasts at a mosque in Malegaon

July 2006: Seven bombs on trains in Mumbai kill 200, injure 700.

March 2006: Twin bombings at a train station and a temple in Varanasi kill 20 and over 100 injured.

October 2005: Three bombs placed in busy New Delhi markets a day before Diwali kill 62 persons and 200 injured.

August 2004: Six dead in two car bomb blasts in Mumbai.

ISI links with ULFA

The recent Indian Army intelligence report about ISI links with ULFA and other militant groups operating North East is a matter of concern. The report says that ULFA is ultimately fighting the Jihadi war on behalf of ISI which is calling the shots and asking them to do what the ISI wants. The ULFA is outsourcing explosives and IEDs from ISI. The Home Ministry report also confirms the fact that ISI has succeeded in bringing ULFA, MULFA and MULTA together to carry out subversive activities in Assam. Earlier these groups were fighting each other.

National Security Advisor cautions

The remarks of the National Security Advisor Shri M.K. Narayanan while addressing the 43rd Conference on Security Policy in Munich attended by prominent international representatives and heads of State reaffirms the stand of the Bharatiya Janata Party that the UPA government headed by Manmohan Singh is soft-peddling terrorism from day one. The admittance of manipulation of stock exchanges in India to fund terrorist groups through fictitious transactions consolidates BJP's assertion that there is a huge flow of funds to support terrorist and Jehadi militant organisations on Indian soil.

The assertion by the National Security Advisor that "official agencies" in Pakistan were pumping millions of dollars for militancy in India along with placement of funds by using underground and parallel banking system reflects a complete failure of the overall intelligence network including the larger economic intelligence. This confirms that the system of intelligence collection and assimilation has virtually collapsed. UPA and the Regulatory Authorities are a complete failure on the Security front.

Assam Killings

The cowardly killing of non-Assamese by ULFA in which 49 people from Bihar and Bengal lost their lives is ironical.. The Centre has once again showed its inept handling of the country's internal security. This unfortunate event is a direct result of the Congress party's and government's soft stand on terror and separatists.

It is a well-known fact that Congress had taken the help of ULFA in elections and because of this, it is unable to deal with the banned outfit firmly. The Congress government at the Centre and the State are responsible for the current state of affairs in Assam as they have always followed the policy of vote bank even at the cost of national interests. The killing of Bihari and Bengali labour is a mat-

ter of grave concern. Indecisiveness in tackling ULFA terror might unleash forces which will be injurious to inter-state cohesion and national unity.

ULFA continues to target

The most devilish aspect of the killings by insurgents in Assam is their deliberate targeting of Hindi-speaking people mostly hailing from Bihar. The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) and the Karbi Longri National Liberal Front (KLNLF), another of the many tribal outfits going on a murderous rampage from time to time, have boastfully associated themselves with the latest series of such killings in the villages of Karbi Anglong district. ULFA terrorists have killed 175 people mainly Biharies since January -August 2007. Only in July - August 2007, 36 people were killed in one week and all of them were Hindi speaking in Karbi Anglong District of Assam. Their killing sprees continued in the first four months of 2008.

'Assam's Muslim population tripled in 50 years

Assam's Muslim majority districts Dhubri 74.30 %, Goalpara 53.70 %, Karimganj 52.3 %, Hailakandi 57.6 %, Barpeta 9.36 % (Census 2001). The Muslim population in Assam has increased by over 313 per cent in half-a--century between 1951 and 2001. As against this, the rate of increase of the state's Hindu population is a little over 193 per cent, said former Director of Census Operations of Assam Shri N C Dutta.

Dutta, during a paper pre-sentation at the recently--held Asam Maha Sanmilan, organised by the Asam Sahitya Sabha, also said unabated influx of people was one of the main reasons behind the reduction of the percentage of Hindu population in the State.

Shri Dutta, who had conducted the 1991 Census operations in Assam, said: "Barpeta sub-division of 1911 (which is the present-day Barpeta district after creation of separate districts of Goalpara, Dhubri and Bongaigaon) had a Muslim population comprising only about one per cent of the total population.

That today's Barpeta district has a Muslim population that is 59.36 percent of its total population itself speaks volumes about the impact of influx of Muslims from Bangladesh and erstwhile East Bengal and erstwhile East Pakistan," Shri Dutta said.

Shri Dutta also pointed out that it was primarily due to the influx of people from the neighbouring country that Lower Assam and the Barak Valley district had registered a high rate of population increase.

"The Lower Assam districts have registered a population increase of 268 per cent between 1951 and 2001. In sharp contrast to this, the Upper Assam districts (where the impact of the influx is considerably low) have together witnessed a population increase by only 170 per cent," he added.

Dutta also recalled an observation made by the then Census Superintendent Shri C S Mullan, who in 1931 had said that Sivasagar would be the only part of Assam in which an Assamese would find himself at home 30 years

LeT stretches wings to North-East

The arrest of two Manipuri terrorists belonging to Lashkar-e-Tayyeba (LeT) outfit from the Red Fort area in Delhi on December 19, 2006 has gone to indicate that this terrorist organisation has stretched its reach to North-East. It is time the UPA woke up from its slumber to act..

Senior Delhi Police and Intelligence Bureau officials say the arrest have revealed the presence of Lashkar units in Northeastern State for the first time ever. "This is a very serious matter as the People United Liberation Front (PULF) was only active in Manipur till now. The presence of Lashkar gives an indication of Bangladesh's support," said Delhi Joint Commissioner of Police

POTA repeal

The scrapping of the Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) by the UPA government to gratify Islamists and communists has not been received well in circles which mean business to fight terrorism, particularly the countries waging a relentless war against terrorism. It is getting reflected in international assessment of India's capacity to combat terrorism. The US Administration, which has been monitoring efforts by individual countries to combat terrorism in compliance with UN Security Council resolutions post 9/11, is of the view that the Government of India lacks the legal wherewithal for an effective counter-terrorism mechanism.

UPA is getting slowly and steadily isolated on the issue. In the first week of December, 2006 President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam suggested the setting up of a dedicated police force equipped with sophisticated gadgetry to fight low-intensity warfare to combat terrorism and extremism. "In order to contain terrorism, the police force will have to create a new cadre trained in low-intensity warfare and equipped with state-of-the-art technologies," he said.

Noting that terrorists were using latest technologies in their

disruptive activities, Dr. Kalam said that “very conscious” police personnel using a combination of human intelligence and connectivity across police forces in many states is the need of the hour. Such a modern police force can effectively contribute to the eradication of terror. He emphasized that the country would have to use innovative tools like mutual legal assistance treaties with other nations “to ensure that organised criminals do not defeat the law enforcement process by taking advantage of crossing national boundaries and evading prosecution”. He said legal reforms like witness protection, concealing the identity of witnesses, compounding of offences and suitable protection to judges would go a long way in reducing the stress on the criminal justice system.

Attack on Samjhouta Express

The attack on the Samjhouta Express at Panipat is a grim reminder to the Indian society that the nation cannot have a Government which has done a ‘Samjhouta with terrorism’. The soft policy of the UPA on terrorism is evident from the fact that despite advice of the Intelligence Agencies it refuses to legislate an anti-terror law. Even after two years, the UPA government is still groping in the dark and has failed to bring the culprits to book.

IB Chief for Special Law

Even the security agencies fighting militancy are feeling peeved and handicapped at facing the increasing threat of terrorism both from within and across the country. The Intelligence Bureau chief Shri E S L Narasimhan on November 23, 2006 strongly articulated the need for special laws to deal with the ever growing terror threat. He also took up another long-held grievance of police personnel – the harassment they have to endure in courts for alleged human rights violations. Tapping into the angst of the intelligence and police community on this score, he asked for adequate legal protection for cops in counter-terrorism operations. He lamented the fact that officers responsible for neutralising *fidayeen* attacks are subjected to legal and extra-legal campaigns by activists. “We need to find answers to these issues as national counter-terrorism strategy suffers immensely when officers and men who put at stake everything in protecting society, find themselves helpless facing legal and extra-legal campaigns when the threats have receded,” Shri Narasimhan said.

Naxals/Maoists

It would be no exaggeration to say that in its lust for power and

votes, Congress has gone to the extent of striking an alliance with terrorists groups, like the Maoists and Naxalites without caring for the consequences to the nation. In the process, these anti-national elements got a further boost to their activities and got recognition. During the period government entered into negotiations with them, they availed themselves of this opportunity to regroup, re-arm, strengthen their cadres and recruiting more people.

Because of politico-electoral considerations the UPA government has been adopting a soft line against the menace of Naxal/Maoist elements. In exchange for electoral support to it during AP assembly elections, the State Congress promised to lift the ban on PWG imposed by the then TDP government. On being voted to power, Congress lifted the ban and entered into a dialogue with these elements. Their leaders armed with guns and ammunition shared the conference table with Congress ministers. The people of this country cannot forget the spectacle of the fully armed Naxalites marching through the streets of Hyderabad the day Union Home Minister was holding a meeting there with the Chief Ministers of Naxalite-affected States. The policy boomeranged on the Congress and the State government had, ultimately, to reimpose ban on the PWG.

The same story was repeated in Assam. With the help of ULFA elements, Congress was able to save itself of the ignomy of defeat and came out as the single largest party after elections. Seeking alliance with other groups, it was able to remain in power.

Because of the weak-kneed policies of UPA the Naxal menace has increased unchecked.

The Naxalite threat pervades in 40 per cent of the country’s geographical area and 35 per cent of its population covering 170 districts in 15 States stretching from Nepal to the South. In contrast, the insurgency in Kashmir and the North-East covers only 11 per cent of the country’s area and 4.5 per cent of its population.

A status paper presented in Parliament by the Home Minister reveals that the total number of people killed by Naxalite violence rose by 30 per cent between 2003 and 2005. The number of policemen killed jumped at an astonishing 53 per cent between 2004 and 2005.

In 2005, naxal violence has been reported from 509 police stations in 11 States which works out to 5.8% of the total number of police station in these States..

The past four years have witnessed shameful attempts by the

UPA Government to compromise national interest for partisan gains. Its incompetence in upholding national security has led to the phenomenal increase in ultra-Left violence throughout the country. The jailbreak in Jehanabad and the incident in the Madhuban block in Bihar show that Naxalite groups are operating with reckless impunity. The Naxalites aim at establishing a “red corridor” from Nepal to Andhra Pradesh. The UPA lacks a consistent policy to deal with the extremist menace. .

Situation in North-East deteriorates

From the situation as it prevails in the north-eastern State of Manipur, it looks the writ of the UPA government does not run there.

In December 2006 Prime Minister visited Manipur for the first time. He was greeted with a total bandh on that day. With elections in the State round the corner, Dr. Manmohan Singh made a number of alluring announcements but the situation does not seem to have improved even a bit.

In Assam, the Congress Government is turning a blind eye to a sinister bid to create tension between Karbis and Dimasas in Karbi Anglong who have lived in peace and amity for centuries. The Congress Government in Assam has colluded with the perpetrators of these assaults on the nation’s integrity.

Misguiding nation on Bangladeshi infiltration

UPA government has adopted myopic and selfish approach towards the grave problem of ‘Demographic Invasion by Bangladeshi infiltrators giving no thought to the long-term harm that this can do to India’s security, unity and integrity. Assam Chief Minister Shri Tarun Gogoi has described Governor Shri Ajai Singh’s report on illegal migrants as being “totally baseless”. Earlier Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh had challenged the figures presented in Parliament by his own minister of State for home affairs, Shri Sri Prakash Jaiswal.

Madarsas

According to an Intelligence Bureau report, in April 2002 there were as many as 23,098 madarsas in 12 States with Kerala having the largest number of 9,975 of them, followed by Madhya Pradesh with 6,000 and Maharashtra with 2,435. The border States of West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat and Rajasthan had 2116, 2002, 1875 and 1780 of them, respectively.

The first requisite is to control their growth through compulsory registration and regulate their functioning and curricula to bring them to the national mainstream and to ensure that they do not preach and breed Islamic terrorism. As terrorism raised its head and, particularly after 9/11, madarasas have become hot news as progenitors of jihadi terrorism. In Pakistan, General Musharraf put them under surveillance. He ordered many foreign students to leave the country. He also imposed certain restrictions on their activities but regrettably, India failed to take even the first preliminary step.



Basketful of constitutional snubs

IMDT ACT unconstitutional

The Supreme Court on July 7, 2005 declared the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunals) Act, 1983 as “unconstitutional”. In view of elections to Assam Assembly UPA government did nothing to implement the Supreme Court order because Congress did not wish to lose the votes of illegal migrants. On the eve of Assam elections, UPA Government issued a notification under the Foreigners Act that puts the onus of proving a particular person as a foreigner on the complainant. This was done just to help the illegal migrants on whose electoral support UPA, particularly the Congress, was banking.

SC strikes down Foreigners Act amendment too

The Supreme Court on November 5, 2006 dealt one more severe blow to UPA Government’s attempts to create a separate regime for identifying illegal migrants in Assam. Striking down two Government notifications amending the Foreigners Act, the court nipped the Centre’s move to re-introduce the Illegal Migrants (Determination by Tribunal) Act through the backdoor.

Taking a dig at the Centre, the Bench of Mr. Justice Shri SB Sinha and Mr. Justice Markandeya Katju said, “There is a lack of will in the matter of ensuring that illegal immigrants are sent out of the country,” and gave a four-month ultimatum to the Centre to implement its orders. The two notifications issued in February 2006 had effected amendments in the prevailing Foreigners Act in the Assam, by which the burden of proving whether a person is an illegal migrant or not rested upon a tribunal and the complainant, who has to satisfy the tribunal. In the parent Act, the onus of proving that an individual was an illegal migrant or not rested on him.

The Bench, while striking down the IMDT Act, had observed

that by introducing the new notifications the Government failed to provide any reasonable explanation. The Bench noted with concern that “it appears that the 2006 Order has been issued just as a cover up for non-implementation of the directions of this court issued in July 2005”.

Holding such exercise of power as violative of Article 14 of the Constitution, the Bench commented, “it is also seen to be attempt by way of a piece of subordinate legislation to nullify the mandamus issued by this court.” The court accepted the contentions of the petitioner who raised fears that the notification is nothing but a reincarnation of the IMDT Act, since the burden of identifying an illegal migrant will be on the tribunal.

What has UPA done in compliance with Supreme Court orders, remains a mystery.

SC declares removal of AIIMS Director as illegal

In another setback to the Congress led UPA government, the Supreme Court on May 8, 2008 struck down the 'All India Institute of Medical Sciences and Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research (Amendment) Act' government had enacted last year to get rid of Dr. P Venugopal as the director of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences and declared it unconstitutional. The apex court's verdict was a big blow to health minister A Ramadoss, who ran a relentless campaign to oust the eminent cardiac surgeon from the renowned institution. Shri Venugopal was sacked from the post of director on November 29 last year, just a day after Parliament passed the AIIMS Amendment Bill, fixing the upper age of retirement of director at 65 years.

A bench of Supreme Court, upheld Shri Venugopal's appeal challenging the AIIMS amendment act 2007, as discriminatory and brought in with malafide intention to superannuate him due to his differences with Health Minister A Ramadoss.

BJP has demanded dismissal of Health Minister if he refuses to resign voluntarily



Scandals and scams

UPA's roll of honour

Quattrocchi, the friend

Latest in the Bofors payoff case is the de-freezing of the personal accounts of the Bofors middleman Ottavio Quattrocchi, courtesy UPA Law Minister Shri H. R. Bhardwaj. As an English daily headlined "On money, this guy will be richer by \$4.2 million (about Rs. 21 crores)". It is an action which, according to CBI sources, amounts to weakening of the case against him. In a party where not a leaf can swing without the nod of its supreme leader, Smt. Sonia Gandhi, the conclusions are obvious. Law Minister Shri Bhardwaj could not have dared to do what he did to help Quattrocchi without the implicit nod of the supreme leader. He couldn't have the courage unless he was sure that it will only gladden her heart. That she was too happy was proved when Congress, instead of removing him for the wrong done, not only defended him but also rewarded him with a nomination for Rajya Sabha for a record sixth time.

Quattrocchi's personal relations with Smt. Sonia Gandhi are too well-known and, according to some sources, date back much earlier. Quattrocchi had claimed closeness of relations with Gandhis in various interviews which have not been contradicted by anybody. The UPA government was kind enough to Quattrocchi although a Red Corner Notice against him still stands and so does the case against him in India. He is still an absconder wanted by the police and the courts. Whom is UPA then kidding?

For obvious reasons, nothing has so far been done to undo the wrong that has been done because the UPA government does not wish to do anything that should annoy the supreme leader of the Congress.

Quattrocchi arrested in Argentina

Quattrocchi was arrested in Argentina on February 20, 2007 as a red corner notice for his arrest was on. As per the Argentine law,

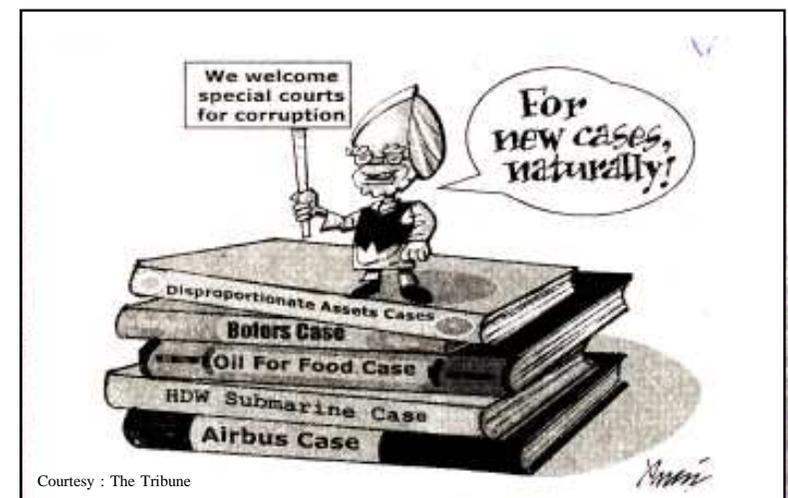
Government of India was required to file a case for his extradition within 30 days, but for over 20 days the UPA government kept this information secret from the people, till it was blasted off by media. It appeared as if the UPA was trying to keep the information in wraps to let the 30 days period expire to let Quattrocchi have a free passage once again. The UPA government was trying to shield itself from the claim that there was no extradition treaty between the two countries, although sources claimed that an extradition treaty was in operation since the days of the British which had not so far been terminated by either of the two.

On the other hand, veteran jurist and BJP General Secretary, Shri Arun Jaitley, pointed out that UPA was taking a wrong stand. Absence of a treaty, he says, is not fatal to extradition. Abu Salem was extradited even when there was no extradition treaty with Portugal.

CBI sabotaged Quattrocchi case at Sonia behest

The revelation before the Supreme Court in the matter of fugitive Quattrocchi is a testimony to the planned sabotage enacted by the CBI at behest of Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi.

CBI's consistent failure has helped Quattrocchi to get released and has enabled him to go back to his country. First, CBI failed to submit documents required under Argentine Law. Second, it failed to submit even the court order of arrest dated 25th May 1997, which was the basis of India's effort to get the fugitive extradited. Third, CBI failed to submit documents to Argentine court for securing ex-



Courtesy : The Tribune

tradition. Forth, it failed to submit to pertinent legal grounds, which were necessary to proceed with extradition order. Fifth, most laughable is CBI's excuse that it could not get officially translated copy of the order of the Argentine court even after five months of SC's order. All these developments confirm our position that government through CBI is involved in operation "Save Quattrocchi".

Quattrocchi was arrested in Argentine on 6th February 2007. This was not made public and even not communicated to the Supreme Court, which was hearing a PIL. His arrest was made public only after he was granted bail on 23rd February 2007. Government's efforts after his getting bail was not for securing his extradition but to ensure his unconditional release from Argentine, he alleged.

Shri Javadekar said the verdict of EL Dorado court on June 8, 2007 goes for automatic appeal as per Argentine law. The Argentine council is on record saying that she was ready for appeal but was not allowed by Indian authorities to proceed. This lapse on part of CBI helped Quattrocchi getting full freedom and leave Argentine.

It may be recalled that earlier also, UPA government through CBI helped Quattrocchi defreeze his London bank accounts and withdraw Rs. 22 crores. This was done with the help of curious remark by director prosecution that there is no prima facie case against Quattrocchi and taking shelter behind a questionable judgment, which should have been challenged. Thus, it's a clear misuse of CBI for helping the Bofors accused.

Quattrocchi walks free

Argentine Public Prosecutor Not Pursuing Matter In Supreme Court

Questions Raised Over CBI's Seriousness

You may do what you can; you may shout as shrill as you can; but I'll do what I want. That seems to be the motto of the ruling UPA government running with the blessings of Congress supremo Smt. Sonia Gandhi.

The law will take its own course. That is the stock and stale phrase the Congress loyalists of the dynasty whether in Government or the organisation repeat with brazen affront to the reality and the law of the land.

Since the day the Italian fugitive and Bofors case prime accused Ottavio Quattrocchi was allowed to slip away from India from under the nose of the then Congress government of late Shri P. V.

Narasimha Rao, this Gandhi family friend had been the recipient of one favour after another at the hands of the Congress governments at the Centre. The latest is the way and the dignity with which the prime accused was allowed to walk away to freedom, courtesy only the present Government who is too willing to help him. In the end the UPA government, including the CBI ended to be the laughing stock and Quattrocchi smiling not only in his sleeves, but even making a fun of Indian government.

Scorpene Deal

It goes to the credit of the NDA that on March 20, 2005 it blasted "the biggest defence scandal so far, one far bigger than the Bofors scam", accusing the Congress-led UPA government of an underhand Rs 18,798 crore Scorpene submarine deal with a French firm and demanded that it be immediately scrapped and a "credible" judicial probe instituted to bring out the truth. It alleged that four per cent commission had been paid to middleman Abhishek Verma and his associates, making this "the biggest defence scandal so far" A demand was made for the immediate arrest of Shri Verma and his associates as also of those foreigners involved in the leak of classified information from the Indian Navy's War Room.

Initially the UPA denied the allegations and did its best to hush up this scam. But later many heads rolled and a number of arrests, including that of Shri Abhishek Verma have been made. But complete reality is still not out.

Mitrokhin disclosures

Publication of the book *Mitrokhin Archive II* in 2005 exposed the shameful history of the Congress and the Communists indulging in sellout of national security for money. According to the book, this national betrayal commenced from the times of Shri Jawaharlal Nehru when the then Soviet secret agency, KGB, allegedly purchased the loyalty of Krishna Menon who later became the Defence Minister of India.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, former US ambassador in Delhi, reportedly revealed that at least on two occasions CIA gave money to Congress which had asked for it during elections against communists. At one time, the money was given to Smt. Indira Gandhi herself when she was a party official during Shri Nehru's tenure as Prime Minister.

According to the book, during 1975, the black year of Smt. Indira Gandhi's dictatorial Emergency, more than one crore roubles

were spent by KGB to support Smt. Gandhi and undermine her political opponents. It is also alleged that KGB files identify by name, the 21 non-communist politicians, including four ministers in Government, whose campaigns in 1977 elections were funded by KGB. The list of KGB funds paid to Congress is a long one and has been detailed thoroughly in the book.

Records also state that between 1975 and early 1977 KGB had paid more than 80 lakh rupees directly to CPI in many instalments. Apart from this CPI entered into an agreement with KGB to start an import-export business with Russia. By 1972, this business had contributed more than one crore rupees to CPI funds. KGB also regularly funded CPI election campaigns and gave substantial funds to its sister organisations like AICTU.

Till date, neither Congress nor the Communist parties have apologised to the nation. They have also failed to give an honest and convincing clarification to the revelations in *Mitrokhin Archive II*.

Volcker report stigma

The Oil-for-Food scandal is another example of subversion of national interests. It is a new addition in the long list of Congress failures. The disclosures made by the UN Committee headed by Paul Volcker named the Congress and then External Affairs Minister Shri Natwar Singh among the non-contractual beneficiaries in the Iraqi oil sales in 2001.

As a first reaction, after meeting Shri Natwar Singh, Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh said the facts mentioned in the UN inquiry into Iraq's Oil-for-Food programme were "insufficient" to arrive at any "adverse conclusion" against him. His media advisor, Shri Sanjay Baru said: "The Prime Minister agreed that the facts mentioned in Table-3 of the report of the Independent Inquiry Committee are insufficient to arrive at any adverse conclusion against the External Affairs and stands by him,"

Later, the Congress and Prime Minister had to eat their own words when Shri Natwar Singh was made to quit, obviously to save the skin of Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi because Congress Party was equally involved in the scandal and this could not have happened without her consent and knowledge.

The investigations so far have zeroed in on Shri Natwar Singh and, surprisingly, the UPA government is keeping an intriguing silence on that part of the scandal in which Congress is involved.

Pathak Authority Report

The report of Justice RS Pathak Authority has proved to be a deft attempt at getting a clean chit to the Congress whose name had appeared as a beneficiary. Although the charges against both the Congress and Shri Natwar Singh were the same as both had been issued one oil voucher each, yet to present a semblance of being fair, impartial and independent, the Authority held that:

The question remains: When charges against both Congress and Shri Natwar Singh were the same, how did the Authority conclude that there is "absolutely no evidence whatsoever" against Congress? It is nothing but a clandestine operation to save the skin of Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi with whose letter Shri Natwar Singh had gone to meet the then Iraq President Saddam Hussein.

SEZs scandals

One of the major UPA government scandals is the manner in which it has permitted mushrooming of over 400 proposed Special Economic Zones (SEZs) all over the country. By distorting a sound SEZ policy formulated by the NDA government, it has allowed many promoters to turn SEZs into the biggest land-grab rackets in the history of independent India.

This is evident from the fact that, under the UPA government's framework of SEZs, the promoters are allowed to retain as much as 65%-75% of the acquired land for non-processing purposes, that is, for purposes other than the industries and services for which the SEZ is sought to be established. All the attractive incentives available to the processing zone will also be available to the land under the much larger non-processing zone. The current legal framework of SEZs also creates a huge disadvantage to industries and business in the Domestic Trading Area (DTA) with the distinct possibility of many of them turning sick.

Not surprisingly, many real estate companies, which have no track record in manufacturing or export business, have overnight become SEZ promoters. It is one of the worst-kept secrets of the UPA government that granting permission to establish SEZs has become a huge source of corruption for the ruling party. This is a repeat of what happened in one of the biggest corruption scandals that rocked the Congress government in the early 1990s, when telecom licences were issued to all and sundry on considerations other than merit.

Experts have already warned that many of the proposed SEZs will either not come up, or will not be successful. Nevertheless, they will have succeeded in dispossessing kisans, *khetmazdoors* (farm labour) and other allied rural workers of their traditional source of livelihood.

The T R Baalu scandal

In UPA there is no dearth of ministers who are guilty of constitutional propriety. The latest to join this roll of honour is Shri T. R. Baalu, the honourable Union Minister for Surface Transport and Shipping. He has chivalrously admitted in the Rajya Sabha that he had "used" his official position to seek allocation of gas for a company owned by his family, which had also been headed by him in the past. Mr. Baalu was bold to admit: "Yes, I put in a word with the Petroleum Minister after the UPA Government was formed in 2004. What is wrong in it?" he asked his critics.

The Minister said he acted to save his companies from closure on the request of many of the 40,000 shareholders and employees. He justified his action saying the NDA had stopped supplies to his firms as his party - the DMK - had left the BJP-led alliance ahead of the Lok Sabha polls in 2004. Shri Baalu said he was the managing director of King Chemicals and King High Power before he became a minister in the NDA government.

"The companies had entered into an agreement with the public sector Gas Authority of India Limited for allocation of 10,000 cubic metre gases," he said. "However, within days of my resignation from the NDA government in 2003, the gas allocation was cancelled. The BJP-led NDA wanted to take revenge after I quit the ministry and the alliance on orders from my leader".

This is yet another self-confessed case of a proven constitutional impropriety. Shri Baalu has violated the oath he took while being sworn in as a Union Minister by the President of India when he stated "...that I will do right to all manner of people in accordance with the Constitution and the law, without fear or favour, affection or ill-will"

Even he was not right when he stated that NDA had withdrawn the gas supply. In fact, he had got gas at a concessional rate.

PMO involved

The PMO wrote not one but eight letters, between November 2007 and February 2008, to the ministry of petroleum and natural gas to expedite gas allocations to these companies. According to

Shri Baalu, "Kings Chemicals has been allotted about 10,000 cubic metre of gas by Gas Authority of India (GAIL). To rehabilitate the Kings Chemicals Company, Kings High Power has approached GAIL; they have provided 4.5 lakh cubic metre gas to see that power is produced out of gas."

It may be recalled that the persistent request to supply gas to Shri Baalu's companies comes at a time when the power sector is suffering from gas shortages. As against the gas requirement of 77 mmscmd, between April 2007 and January 2008, only 36.75 mmscmd of gas was supplied on an average. Such is the shortage that the country's 13,444 mw gas based capacities have had to operate below par at 53 % plant load factor and another 1,285 mw of capacity remain stranded on account of no gas. In other words, the shortage of gas meant that the existing gas-based power plants were producing far lower quantities of power than they are capable of and new plants which should have been generating power have been put on hold.

Facts are otherwise

The Oil ministry had restored gas supply to Baalu family firm and withdrew order only a week earlier after the issue rocked Parliament. Petroleum Ministry wrote to Gail to withdraw its earlier letter clearing supply to KICC, owned by Baalu's son

The Petroleum Ministry had restored gas supply in January to King India Chemicals Corp-one of the two firms for which Union Shipping and Surface Transport Minister T R Baalu was pulling strings-but it quietly withdrew the order after the Opposition badgered the government on misuse of office. Under Secretary K K Sharma of the Petroleum Ministry wrote to GAIL (India) Ltd's CMD that the letter dated January 4 asking GAIL to supply natural gas to KICC "is hereby withdrawn".

Sharma quoted a February 19 order by Madras High Court on writ appeals which set aside the previous single-judge order of reinstating the supply to KICC. As per the new order, both KICC and Kings India Power Corp would have to submit afresh their plea for gas allocation. "As per the directions of the Court, the fresh representations from the petitions would be considered separately," wrote Sharma.

The ministry would "examine the representation on its own merits and pass appropriate orders in accordance with the law," he added.

Petroleum Minister Shri Murli Deora had claimed that the PMO had not issued any order or any instructions to help the company and "not a single cubic metre gas has been supplied to the companies".

Their demand was for subsidised gas sold at administered price of \$1.96 per million British thermal units whereas the market price is anywhere between \$6 and \$16 per mBtu

According to a status report from GAIL (India) Ltd, not only did Shri Baalu ask for a cut in gas transportation cost, he even got it reduced. But he still did not sign the contract although GAIL kept sending reminders - until it lapsed.

In the much-awaited report sought by the Prime Minister's Office, GAIL says it "vigorously pursued" with King India Power Corp (KIPC) to sign the transportation contract for the 0.45 million standard cubic metres of gas per day allotted to it.

"However, in spite of our repeated reminders, the party did not come forward to sign the contract and in January 2004, the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas conveyed that the allocation has lapsed," says the report signed by GAIL's General Manager (Gas Marketing) Shri N S Parthasarthy.

The sequence of events makes it clear that KIPC was informed in August 1999 that it would be charged Rs 654 as transport tariff for every thousand cubic metres (TCM) of gas. But Shri Baalu's firm sought parity with Kovilkalapal plant of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB) which was paying Rs 250 per TCM.

However, on the Minister's insistence, this tariff was lowered to Rs 497 per TCM for KIPC in November 2000 only to be raised exactly three years later - when Shri Baalu was still a Cabinet minister in the NDA coalition - to Rs 750 per TCM because of higher steel prices and other related costs.

"As such the contention that GAIL has not communicated the price of gas is not correct and as a matter of fact, King India was in full knowledge of the total price since this was administered price gas and transmission charges were indicated as far back as August 1999," says the GAIL letter.

■

Communists

The Legendary *Shakunis* of India

The Indian Communists, mainly those in the Communist Party of India (Marxists) are enjoying the unenviable political position of enjoying the fruits of power at the Centre without the mandate of the people. Above all, for all practical purposes they are in the ruling combine without accountability and responsibility. They grab credit for everything, if any goes, well in UPA and put the blame squarely on UPA for everything going wrong. They are as much responsible for the ills of the country under UPA as the Manmohan government itself. Their tales of terror and brutality are now too well known.

Left's toothless barks

Real face gets unmasked

Still stranger is the conduct of communist parties supporting Manmohan government from outside. Every other day they continue to bark at UPA and warn it that they could bite too. Ironically, it has always been the fate of the Left parties to ultimately wag their tails in humble submission before their political master Congress and each time to quietly compromise on their stand they were very loudly vocal to pretend to protest before the people.

Be it the case of increase in the prices of petrol, diesel, cooking gas, power and water



charges, or FDI in industry or commerce, PSU disinvestment, the Leftists have been as brave in opposing it in the print and electronic media as they are meek in silently letting UPA have its way in all these matters. In October 2005 they even organised an all-India strike against these measures. They had another such strike in December 2006 too. In April 2008 they were on the roads against price rise too.

But whom are the Left parties befooling? During the last four years, when were the prices under control or were not rising? What did they do all these four years as active supporters of the UPA government to mitigate the sufferings of the people? If they could exercise a decisive role in making Manmohan government yield to put the Indo-US civil nuclear deal in cold storage, why did they fail to be equally effective in the matter of price rise? Left parties are as much to be blamed for every wrong the UPA may be committing or may have committed, including price rise, as is the government itself.

The moment Left parties go wild in their denunciation of UPA policies, immediately comes an invitation either from the Prime Minister or the Congress President Smt. Sonia Gandhi for a friendly meeting over lunch, dinner, or breakfast.

The mouth-watering cuisine served at these meetings acts as an intoxicating drink that makes them forget the common man's plight exactly the same manner as does the man who purchases a bottle of wine with the money he received from his wife to fetch atta/ rice and gets so intoxicated that he forgets the fact that his wife and children are hungry at home. The Left leaders leave the meeting place smiling and satisfied. True to their nature, they wave red flags, in public, to the anti-people policies of UPA and surreptitiously give a green signal to the UPA at these private meetings. It appears that in the four walls of these meetings they only express their profound apologies for their conduct which, they explain, is their helplessness to adopt before the people to survive in the politics of today.

Otherwise, how can they explain the contradiction in their words and conduct? Important CPM leaders are on record having said that UPA should not take their support for granted. "We don't only bark", they have often said very bravely in public, "but we can bite too". It now appears that either their bark is hollow, or they have turned the pets of UPA which can only bark but never bite even if challenged. Or they don't have the teeth at all or these stand already

broken.

Left parties are totally opposed to the Indo-US Nuclear deal and want it rejected outright. UPA still went ahead despite their opposition. It has finally been approved and signed by President of USA. Prime Minister has rejected their demand and shown no concern to their pleadings. The communists stand where they are -- shouting, but acquiescing into accepting the obvious.

During the 2006 winter session of Parliament, the Congress went to the extent of challenging the Left parties to withdraw their support to the UPA government. They have yet to be brave to accept it.

The involvement of Left in the decision-making of UPA Government has produced major distortions in the country's governance. The Left wants the best of both the worlds and enjoy power without responsibility. It is guilty of duplicity.

CPM is not what it claims

It was ironic on the part of CPM Politburo member Shri Sita Ram Yechury to boast in one of his article that "out of the 61 Left MPs in the Lok Sabha, 54 of them reached there by defeating Congress candidates". And yet the Left parties had the cheek - and the high 'democratic' principles - to support that very Party in Parliament speaking and fighting against whose programmes, policies and individuals had it won people's mandate for these 54 parliamentary seats. Does it not amount to cheating the electorate? Why should the people have voted for CPI (M) if the people knew that Left MPs were, ultimately, to support Congress?

It remains a fact that the Left parties are speaking in two tongues - one in New Delhi and quite the opposite in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura.

Singur land grabbing

Singur land grabbing case (West Bengal) has resulted in a flare up between people and the Communist regime because of the insensitive and neo-capitalist mindset of the present leadership in West Bengal. The State government seems to be so much worried about big industries that it is playing with the lives of hundreds of farmers by snatching away their fertile lands in the name of industrialisation. Those who took to the streets were brutally beaten up and put behind bars. Trinamul Congress President Ms Mamta Banerjee vociferously opposing the Tata Project in Singur was physically and mentally tortured by Communist parties in every possible way to

force her withdraw the agitation.

But she is not the person to submit so easily. Her agitation has managed to grab the attention of every pro-farmer activist and leader in the country. The Singur issue hit national headlines when BJP President Shri Rajnath Singh decided to lend moral support to this agitation of farmers. He immediately rushed to Kolkata on the evening of December 3 after getting the news of three protestors having being killed in police firing. He meet Sushri Mamta Bannerjee and assured full support to her cause.

Nandigram

The *Sangram* CPM lost despite Stalinist brutalities

In a shocking display of strong-arm tactics adopted by the Marxist government of West Bengal, thousands of State Policemen, backed by CPM cadre, opened fire on the farmers of Nandigram protesting against forcible acquisition of their agricultural land by the State Government for a Special Economic Zone Project. This utterly shameful, seemingly pre-planned act which killed many and left many more injured took place in broad daylight on March 13, turning the green fields of Nandigram into killer fields.

As the police and CPM cadres were jointly perpetuating their orgy of violence and mayhem, the media was barred from entering Nandigram reviving memories of the Emergency Era

This act of brutality unparalleled in independent India shocked the whole country generating widespread protest in Kolkata and calls of bandh from Trinamul and BJP. Both houses of Parliament were rocked as agitated BJP and Trinamul Congress members forced an adjournment in the Rajya Sabha and staged a walkout in the Lok Sabha. The BJP and Trinamul MPs stormed the well of the House and shouted slogans alleging that the Nandigram incident was a repeat of the "Jallianwala Bagh" outrage perpetuated by colonial British rulers.

The BJP took a very strong stand against this State sponsored atrocity. Leader of the Opposition, Shri L.K.Advani spoke to Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh and Home Minister, Shri Shivraj Patil requesting them to seek a report from the West Bengal Governor on this violence. Shri Advani called it one of the most unfortunate events since Independence. BJP President Shri Rajnath Singh demanded a judicial or parliamentary probe into the police firing. He said the State Government had lost the moral authority to continue in office.

CPM not shocked, Governor was

WB Governor Shri Gopal Krishan Gandhi said the use of force in Nandigram could have been avoided. In a statement, he asked: "Was this spilling of human blood not avoidable? What is the public purpose served by the use of force that we have witnessed today?" Expressing "a sense of cold horror" at the incident, he said: "Force against anti-national elements, terrorists, extremists is one thing. The receiving end of the force used today does not belong to that order".

Later, CPM itself admitted that their own cadre were involved in the carnage.

Nandigram carnage

Amnesty report indicts CPM Government

The well-known human rights organisation Amnesty International has come out with a shocking revelation in its report released on January 15 after its delegation visited the area that although violence in Nandigram was likely to intensify in October 2007, yet the only remaining police posted at Nandigram were withdrawn without any reasons being given.

Quoting Shri Satya Prakash Panda, District Superintendent of Police, the report says that the delegation was told that the order to withdraw the remaining police came from his superiors in Kolkata and that it took almost two weeks to deploy CRPF personnel after the State police force pullout.

For 14 days, according to the report, the people of Nandigram were left at the mercy of the CPI (M) and the Bhumi Ucched Pratirodh Committee (BUPC). However, on November 13, the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee alleged that it was the Union Government, which had caused the delay. The entire district witnessed armed confrontations between the CPI (M) and BUPC.

According to the report, during the bloodshed, women were more vulnerable. Several were threatened, raped, beaten up and harassed. "This is a serious issue. During such incidents women are targetted and sexually abused in our country. In West Bengal, those women were targetted who were either leaders or activists. "They told us that they were harassed as we were leader or our husbands were leaders. I have met several women who have given the names and details of perpetrators to the authorities but nothing happened," says Vrinda Grover, a lawyer, activist and member of the delegation of Amnesty International that visited Nandigram after the Novem-

ber violence.

"The threats have not ended till now, rapists are roaming freely, abusing women and they are also threatening more sexual assaults in the future. Violence in Nandigram was used as a weapon against women. A number of local residents informed the delegation that the offenders were operating with impunity, taunting the people, forcing them to shout in supports of CPI(M) or attend its meeting", she added. Relatives or sympathisers of BUPC too lost their lives or were subjected to abuse and brutality, especially the women, the report discloses. "Accounts of both officials and villagers relating to violence against women agreed that victims were either relatives or sympathisers of BHPC and named the perpetrators as groups of armed supporters of the CPI (M)".

The report also urges the State Government to ensure that all incidents of human rights abuses since early 2007 are thoroughly investigated and the culprits, whether or not they are officials and regardless of their political affiliation, are brought promptly to justice. "Victims continued to suffer. People who have abused and attacked or took up the violence neither arrested nor booked. This highlights the great sense of insecurity. The State Government must establish an independent and impartial inquiry", said Shri Mukul Sharma, Director, Amnesty International India.

Nandigram still smouldering

The violence in Nandigram has reappeared. Now the strife-ravaged Nandigram region has been witnessing customary violence, between the CPI (M) supporters and the Bhumi Ucched Pratirodh Committee members.

On March 3, this year violence started by the CPI (M) supporters in Nandigram, just before Chief Minister Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee's scheduled visit to the area to preside over a ceremony. Again clashes started a day after the Opposition parties, took out rallies and processions to mark the first anniversary of the brutal and horrendous killings and atrocious rapes and molestations in last year in Nandigram, that left 14 dead and many people homeless and 75 were injured in police firing. On April 18, the situation aggravated further when a housewife in Gokulnagar was gangraped by CPI (M) supporters. On April 20, when Sushri Mamata Banerjee's had gone to Nandigram to visit the rape victim, her convoy was attacked by CPI (M) hoodlums. On the eve of the Panchayat elections in May this year the Nandigram, fresh violence has registered several deaths, rapes and molestations of innocent people. The ensuing violence

spread to other areas of Nandigram, including Hazrakata, Satengabadi and Chowringhee Bazaar, and shops, houses were damaged in the violence. It reveals that under the protection of state police the Gunda Raj of CPI (M) members have been continuing in Nandigram.

The police on May 9 barred filmmaker Aparna Sen and 16 other eminent personalities from going to Nandigram. They were turned back by the police at Bagnan in Howrah district following the district magistrate's instruction. Sen, accompanied by thespian Shaoli Mitra, singer Pallab kirtania and others. Reacting to the incident, Sen said, "I am a citizen of this country and I have the right to go anywhere I like".

Poll violence killed 11 in West Bengal House of RSP Minister bombed

There was palpable tension in West Bengal's trouble-torn Nandigram region as three supporters of the Opposition Trinamool Congress were shot on May 10, 2008 morning at Jalpai in Nandigram and at least eight people including a month-old infant were killed by the CPM cadres, during the first phase and second phase of Panchayat poll held in five districts of West Bengal.

The first phase of polls in five districts of West Bengal was also marred by a confrontation between CPI (M) activists and CRPF personals. During the polling, Maoists detonated a landmine in Purulia, killing a BSF Jawan and injuring 11 others, while CPI (M) cadres allegedly blocked supporters of the Trinamool Congress from casting their vote at some villages in Nandigram.

Three women activists of Bhumi Ucched Pratirodh Committee were beaten up and stripped by CPM cadres in Nandigram for refusing to support the Marxists in the ensuing Panchayat polls.

Armed CPM cadres freely walked around in Nandigram and on May 15 in one of the worst turf battles between two Left front constituents, CPM and RSP, they allegedly bombed and set ablaze the house of Shri Subhash Naskar, WB Irrigation Minister from RSP, injuring a relative, daughter-in-law who is critical and Minister's nephew received burn injuries.

Strange ways of CPM

Strange are the ways of the CPI (M). These are ever inconsistent and contradictory. On May 10 2008 CPM, which is supporting the UPA government from outside, declared Dr. Manmohan as a "failed

Prime Minister". West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhdev Bhattacharya echoing the same sentiments also said PM has "failed on all fronts."

Did it not mean that CPM is supporting a government whose Prime Minister has "failed on all fronts"? Why would any party, be it CPM or some other, want to support such a government and Prime Minister?

Realizing the fallout of the statement West Bengal Chief Minister Buddhdev Bhattacharya met the Prime Minister on May 11 and apologized for his own and party's utterances. How far can such a political party earn the faith and support of the people?

Situation in Nandigram Grim and Fearful

The Panchayat poll observer appointed by the West Bengal State Election Commission had described the situation in Nandigram "grim, fearful and beyond normalcy".

Now a Nandigram in Kerala Red terror in Munnar

2,000 CPM men grab 1,500-acre land; evict 200 tribal families having titles

Around 2,000 CPM men, according to the Indian Express, have grabbed a 1,500-acre stretch of prime government land in Munnar's Chinnakkanal area, after physically removing 200-odd landless tribal families agitating for pieces of land that were legally granted to them four years ago, but never given.

Hundreds of CPM workers, trucked into the area, on Nov. 26, 2007 destroyed the huts the tribals had set up and forced them to retreat to a neighbouring hilltop, where they now huddle refusing to go away. The CPM men have fenced off huge pieces of the land and have already begun constructing their own huts and sheds there.

In an all-party mediation meeting called by the Munnar Additional District Magistrate (ADM) it was resolved that both the CPM and tribal encroachers would move out of the encroached Chinnakkanal land within 48 hours. The meeting saw heated altercations between workers of the CPI and CPM men.

Trouble began a fortnight after the pro-tribal outfit, the Adivasi Rehabilitation Council, occupied the land that the Government had leased to Hindustan Newsprint Ltd. They demanded that the Government hand over the land, for which they had been given title deeds in 2003, when Shri A K Antony was chief minister. They dispersed after local revenue officials assured that this would be

done.

But with nothing appearing to happen, the tribals regrouped and went into the land again, building little huts and vowing to start farming from next week. A day later, the CPM began deploying its ranks to the area, tearing down the tribal huts and putting up their own, erecting fences and planting party flags all over the grabbed land.

This is despite the fact that many of the agitating tribals are carrying three-year-old government land titles issued to them. Though the CPM is leading from the front in driving them out, local sources say other political parties too are in the background.

Tension in Kannur, BJP worker hacked to death

After a brief lull, political murders are back in Kannur district of Kerala. Shattering the fragile peace in this Marxist bastion, according to a Times of India report, a BJP worker was brutally murdered on August 16 while his colleague was critically injured. The BJP blamed CPM for the incident and called for a dawn to dusk bandh in the district the next day.

The incident took place early in the morning when Pramod, a concrete worker; was going to work with his colleague Prakashan and three others. While they were nearing the work site, a gang of about 20 men armed with sharp edged weapons attacked them. While three of them managed to run away. Pramod later died in hospital. Prakash is fighting for his life with the attack severing both his legs.

BJP State President Shri P K Krishnadas called it a "planned murder" and blamed the CPM for turning to violence to divert attention from the spate of corruption scandals facing the party in the state.

CPM murder politics

Kerala High Court raps CPM again

In a major embarrassment to the CPM, which is converting Kannur into a killing field of activists of RSS and other political rivals, the Kerala High Court came down heavily on it, for failure to prevent CPM-RSS clashes, biased police investigations and delayed trial aimed at helping the murder accused.

"The madness and barbarity in Thalassery must be put an end to. Righteousness has to reassert itself there. This is the yearning of sublime polity. The political system and judicial institution cannot

avoid the blame for the unfortunate state of affairs in Kannur district. Immediate punishment and not the severity of punishment is the best insurance for a crime-free society."

Criticising the police, which has become the boot-lickers of Home Minister Kodiyeri Balakrishnan who is aiding and abetting CPM murders on RSS in Kannur, the Judge observed, "Biased investigators, partisan attitude of the investigators dancing to the tunes of the political masters and the consequent dissatisfaction in the public mind is an important reason for such a climate of violence. The state must constitute an unbiased Special Investigation Team (SIT) of efficient persons with no disturbance to their continuance to the post, before they completed the mission."

Tripura CPM minister quits over terror links

The ruling Left Front in Tripura had to face a major embarrassment when a CPM Minister had to resign from his post on April 17 over his alleged links with jihadis in Bangladesh.

Tripura Food and Civil Supplies Minister Sahid Choudhury put in his papers amid pressure from Opposition BJP accusing him of having links with Mamun Mian, a Bangladeshi national having HuJI links.

Left government is exposed

West Bengal boils over PDS corruption

The people-friendly CPM government in West Bengal received a jolt when a revolt over the demand for a corruption free public distribution system in West Bengal spread like wildfire across West Bengal. The escalating violence over protest against corruption in the PDS system claimed three lives in Burdwan, Bankura and Birbhum districts in police firing. The series of violent protests against the corrupt ration dealers were sparked off after people complained that they were not supplied wheat, rice or sugar for the last few months, though the distributors were issued the supplies from the state food department. Angry people are now demanding that the Left parties should concentrate less on stepping up the ante over the Indo-US nuke deal and more on ensuring that people are given food.



Failures miscellany

Befooling women on reservation

Time and again Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and the UPA chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi had been reiterating that the Women Reservation Bill will be presented to Parliament and got through. But each time this has not happened.

Before the commencement of winter session of Parliament in November 2006, Smt. Sonia Gandhi announced that she will strive to strike consensus for passage of the Women Reservation Bill which had been hanging fire since UPA government took office. She has failed to marshal unanimity even within the UPA itself

Women's Reservation Bill

UPA did finally manage a stage-managed show to present the Women's Reservation Bill, but not in the Lok Sabha, but in the Rajya Sabha and referred to the standing committee of the House. Immediately, afterwards the Rajya Sabha was adjourned sine die. It is believed that it is just a ruse and the Bill may never see the light of the day. The only saving grace is that since Rajya Sabha is a permanent house, the Bill will never lapse.

This has deliberately been done to hoodwink the people, particularly women, on the eve of Karnataka elections. There is no unanimity on the issue even within the alliance partners. Shri Lalu Prasad's RJD and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party have already expressed their opinion against the Bill after its presentation, in spite of the fact that they approved the draft of the Bill when presented for approval of the Cabinet. For the Standing Committee RJD has nominated its MP Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav, its most vocal face against anti-women's reservation..

Atrocities on Women increase

Atrocities against women have increased manifold since the

UPA assumed power. Of particular concern is the growing number of incidents of rape in trains and in running cars and parks in the national capital New Delhi.

Instances of sexual harassment, dowry deaths and other forms of torture on women have also witnessed abnormal increase.

Delhi – The Rape Capital of India

Of late, Delhi has earned the dubious distinction of being the Rape Capital of India. Over 330 rape and molestation cases have been reported in the first four months of 2008. According to official figures, 121 cases of rape were registered so far this year while about 210 incidents of molestation were reported from various parts of the city.

Eight minors were among the 14 females raped in the city in April

A two-and-half year-old girl was the youngest rape victim while two minors were sexually assaulted in a moving car, including one in which a traffic police constable was arrested along with his friend. The constable has since been dismissed from service.

A teenaged boy, who was arrested for allegedly raping a minor girl, escaped from police custody in north-west Delhi.

While 658 rape cases were reported in 2005, the figure fell to 49 the next year. The number of molestation cases was 762 and 713 for 2005 and 2006 respectively while last year, 835 such incidents were reported.

Delhi sealing

The worst failure of the UPA government at the Centre and the Congress Government in Delhi has been the bungling in the matter of sealing of unauthorized commercial establishments and demolition of unauthorized construction.

According to a rough estimate, more than 65,000 establishments are affected by the Delhi government's plan to demolish illegal construction and seal commercial establishments functioning in residential areas.

The irony of the situation is that these illegal multi-storeyed buildings did not sprout out overnight. These rose right under the nose and before the eyes of the administration. They got power, water supply, sewerage and telephone connections. They paid taxes to the municipal authorities and the government.

Similar is the fate of the commercial establishments functioning

within the residential areas.

Despite solemn pledges and promises made to the affected people, nothing has so far been done to solve the problem to the satisfaction of all. The State Congress government of Delhi and UPA government at the Centre have failed to rise to the occasion. It is interesting to note that the Urban Development Minister at the Centre too belongs to the Congress.

The future of lakhs of people and their employees subsisting on these commercial establishments has been rendered bleak and uncertain. Besides the legal problems, the Delhi sealing also has a social and human aspect towards which the present government has so far paid no attention and displayed no sympathy.

On its part, BJP has resolved to stand by the affected people in this hour of their need and to make any sacrifice to prevent their harassment and torture.

UPA and the Congress have failed to display honesty of purpose and determination to work out a solution that is acceptable to all.

Court directs CBI to re-probe Tytler's role in '84 pogrom

The Congress does make a great noise about post-Godhra riots, but for the past over 23 years the Congress government at the Centre had done nothing to punish the culprits of the anti-Sikh riots that took place in November 1984 only in the States ruled by Congress. It has failed to provide justice to the families whose bread-earners were brutally murdered.

The main reason has been that it was the Congress leaders who had instigated and led the riots against the Sikhs. The party even gave such guilty persons nominations for Lok Sabha, Vidhan Sabha and Rajya Sabha. Some were made ministers even. It had throughout been protecting the guilty Congressmen.

In December last a Delhi court ordered the CBI to reinvestigate the role of former Union Minister Shri Jagdish Tytler in the 1984 anti-Sikh riots case and record the statement of the key-witness Shri Jasbir Singh now settled in California, USA.

The relatives of the victims of the 1984 riots welcomed the court's decision. "We were shattered when the CBI cleared Shri Tytler's name from the case but now the court order has restored our faith in judiciary." The victims also alleged that CBI was not taking up the matter seriously.

The Nanavati Commission, which was constituted to look into the riots, in its reports had claimed evidence against Congress leaders Jagdish Tytler, Sajjan Kumar and HKL Bhagat for instigating the mobs to violence.

Imported wheat failed all quality tests but was still distributed

The (UPA) Government's move to import 23 lakh tonnes of wheat at a far higher cost than originally stated by the State Trading Corporation (STC) is already a political controversy with the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) currently holding an inquiry into the tendering and pricing process. Now the quality of 9.2 lakh tonnes of the 15 tonnes that landed is in question with the Food Corporation of India (FCI) trading charges with STC and informing the Food Ministry that the stocks received were "inferior," failed quality tests and "would not give a healthy picture among the general public at large."

The Sunday Express claimed it had obtained correspondence between the FCI, STC and the Food Ministry as well as the lab analysis results of nine samples of imported red wheat which landed in Mundra (1.25 lakh tonnes of Russian wheat) and Kandla (7.95 lakh tonnes from Glencore) which show presence of "foreign matter, damaged, shrivelled and broken" grain exceeding "contractual limits."

While the total contractual limit for damaged grains and foreign matter (mostly chaff) is 7 per cent, the four tested samples showed a total of between 10%-11% (see chart). Food Ministry officials said that of the 15 lakh tonnes of imported wheat stocks - from which samples were picked for testing - around 10 lakh tonnes have been distributed nationwide, including through the public distribution system.

The tests were conducted by the FCI at the Institute of Food Security (IFS), Gurgaon, and sent to Food Secretary T Nanda Kumar on October 30 last year. Following this, charges were traded between FCI and STC and a high-level meeting on the subject was held at STC headquarters on November 7 where a modified scheme of joint sampling before laboratory tests was mooted.

Kohli went on to add: "Since the stock has to be given to the public/consumer through PDS as well as under different schemes directly or indirectly to the consumer, this may not give a healthy picture among the general picture at large...in such circumstances, FCI shall be within its rights to recover losses suffered on account of

receipt of such inferior quality stocks due to failure of effective moni

Leakages failing PDS

The Manmohan Singh government may be banking on procurement for PDS to contain price rise and avoid imports but the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has slammed the scheme for leakage of 42% of grain and siphoning off of 36% budgetary subsidies from the supply chain.

In a comprehensive report, the PAC said that apart from budgetary leaks, fair price shops were generally found to be not viable and "remained in business through leaks and diversions of foodgrain". Target errors and bogus cards further reduced efficacy of PDS and in all, only 57% of BPL households were covered by it.

The report said that audit scrutiny of records revealed that there was a diversion of a staggering 44.04 lakh metric tonnes of foodgrain meant for distribution under targeted PDS in Assam, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jammu & Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Meghalaya, Nagaland and West Bengal.

It noted that more than 75% of total offtake of BPL quota in Bihar and Punjab was diverted, 50-70% in Haryana, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, 25-40% in Assam, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Rajasthan and up to 25% in Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal. In 2003-04, of 14.07 million tonnes of foodgrain dispatched for delivery to the poor, only around 5.93 million tonnes actually reached poor families. "...5.12 million tonnes leaked out from the supply chain (FCI godowns to retail outlets) because of corruption in the delivery system," the report said.

The findings of the PAC are a matter of worry to the government as a large number of the poor are outside the PDS basket and, therefore, hitting procurement targets will offer no comfort. If those in BPL category, seen to bear the worst of inflation in terms of their food budgets, are still going to be dependent on open market sales, government will be at the receiving end.

The PAC said that an audit noticed that there were 8.55 lakh ineligible families in Andhra Pradesh, 5.22 lakh BPL and Antodaya Ann Yojana bogus cards in UP and that in Delhi renewal of APL cards was last done in 1996-97. The PAC was told by senior officials that there was an almost unresolvable problem of conflicting claims over number of poor. The states tended to inflate this figure, while the Planning Commission and Centre had different estimates.

In conclusion

The PAC was told that while the percentage of poor had declined to 27.5% in 2004-05 from 36% in 1993-94, there was no comparative reduction in PDS claimants. "Calculations show that likely increase in the number of poor due to increase in present population since March, 2000, will be more than offset by the reduction in the poverty ratio between 1993-94 and 2004-05, however GOI is continuing allocations based on March, 2000 population," the PAC was told.



UPA is not only an opportunistic alliance just to enjoy the fruits of power, it also had its birth on the basis of false promises made to the people during elections and after elections. People elect a government for national prosperity, financial stability and social security. People need representatives who usher in good governance, create a strong administration which extends protection to the life and property of citizens, provides employment, food, shelter and safeguards the society. The Congress-led UPA Government has failed on all these fronts and the people feel cheated after four years of its rule.

Congress has not fulfilled the promises it made to the people in its manifesto. The UPA Government has deviated from the Common Minimum Programme so often that it has been reduced to a "Minimum Programme" and exposed the UPA as an "Unholy Political Alliance" or the "Ultra Pulta Alliance" as Shri M. Venkaiah Naidu said once .

The shortsighted policies of UPA have divided the country on the basis of caste, religion and region. A weak Government has left the countrymen insecure and in constant fear. Battered by an indifferent Government which does not care for them, the future of the India -- the youth -- are restless, hurt and angry.

Today, under UPA the country is under the mercy of terrorists who strike anywhere at will and there is no government to lay its hands on these anti-national and antisocial elements. Terrorists from across the border are getting help and shelter within the country. During the last four years, no terrorist has been sentenced for his crime. And those, like Afzal Guru, who were convicted because of the alertness shown by NDA government and the investigating agencies, are being given a new lease of life.

The India which was taking her place on the world stage has now been reduced to a nation plunged in the darkness of despair. In four years, UPA has pushed our country towards instability, chaos and anarchy.

Enough is enough. UPA is already on its last breath. The time has come to say good-bye to this rotten alliance. People will certainly do when they get the opportunity to vote.

