

Editorial

Imphal, Monday, July 18, 2016

Delivery issues

While the change in regime at the centre had many raising their expectations and hopes for a radical change in the outlook of the central government from that of a welfareist nature to that of an industrialized one in consonance with the assurances and promises made by the present prime minister during the campaigns, what has played out in reality has left many with a bitter aftertaste even before the first five-year term is over. Doubts and suspicions of the NDA government following the path much trodden by the UPA government has already reared its ugly head, and with it the inherent uncomfortable feeling that the initial euphoria and celebrations have been a little too premature. There is no dearth of welfare schemes catering to almost every aspect of a citizen's life: livelihood, health, security, education, food- you name it, there ought to be a scheme which is in force or, in the rarest of circumstances, being drawn up and ready for implementation. The most imperative question one would have to try to answer next is: despite the show of persistence in continuing with the plethora of social security and welfare schemes, what is the level of efficiency of such schemes? In other words, how far has these schemes been able to benefit the intended beneficiaries?

Taking into account the protracted allegations of mismanagement and siphoning of resources intended for the real beneficiaries which is perhaps as old as the schemes, it becomes clear that the real fault lies not with the intent or objective, but with the delivery mechanism which leaves much to be worked on. In short, the mechanisms in place at present to effect implementation of these welfare and security schemes needs to be reviewed in earnest to plug any loopholes in the system, and there are lots more than the authorities would care to admit at this juncture. Newer and more effective systems of checks and balances need to be introduced immediately to ensure greater efficiency in delivery.

The most effective system, however, would be for the beneficiaries to be made aware of the benefits being extended to them by the central and state governments and the exact details of such benefits. Raising the awareness of the intended targets as well as devising a system where their complaints and grievances can be addressed at the shortest time while fixing responsibilities and accountabilities for each part of the chain will bring down the instances of pilferage, misappropriations and deliberate siphoning of resources and benefits to a manageable level. The beneficiaries need to be made to understand that these welfare and security measures are not merely another run-on-the mill regular programs of the government, but are aimed at bringing down the restraints of daily needs on the poor and the needy so that their days can be more gainfully utilized. The beneficiaries need to make themselves feel empowered enough to demand the proper and effective implementation of the schemes. The development and progress of the country depends as much on the proactive participation of the marginalized and needy citizens as it is on drawing up efficient and inclusive plans and schemes.

US resumes airstrikes against IS as Turkey reopens air base

Washington, July 18: The US resumed airstrikes against the Islamic State (IS) after Turkey opened its airbase which was closed in the wake of a failed attempted coup on July 16.

Speaking to reporters onboard his plane after a visit to Afghanistan, Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joseph Dunford, confirmed the reopening of the Incirlik Air Base in Turkey, *Xinhua* news agency reported on Monday. "We resumed flight operations, and airspace is opened back up—business as usual," Dunford told Pentagon reporters, adding there are no plans to change the US force posture in Turkey.

"Our relationship with Turkey as a Nato ally is broad—politically, economically and from a security perspective," he said.

In terms of urgency, the US was most concerned about the counter-IS fight and its partnership with Turkey in the fight, Dunford added. The border area between Turkey and Syria was critical, as foreign fighters and money flow across the border, Dunford noted. "The Turkish-Syrian border is important to isolate the battlefield in Syria," he said, adding "and so we're watching that pretty closely, too."

Dunford expressed relief that Turkey "bounced back pretty quickly" in the first 24 hours in terms of facilitating operations in Syria. Turkey closed the airspace of the Incirlik Air Base and cut commercial power supply following Friday's military coup attempt, in which at least 290 people, including 190 civilians, were killed.

By : Lt Gen (Retd) SK Sinha

October 20 was the fiftieth anniversary of our Himalayan Pearl Harbour. The humiliation of a highly professional army of two centuries standing, with an outstanding war record in battles fought over different continents, stunned the world. During the two world wars, the Indian Army earned a very enviable reputation among the Allied armies.

Winston Churchill referred to the over two million Indian Army in laudatory terms, describing it as the largest volunteer army known to history. Having seen the prelude to the 1962 war from close quarters at the highest level, I shall recount how the Army had started hurtling down towards an abyss from 1959 or even earlier.

Lt Gen BM Kaul and Air Vice Marshal Harjinder Singh were both favourites of Defence Minister Krishna Menon and had direct access to him. Besides, General Kaul was very close to Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. The first three days of that war followed by a lull of nearly three weeks and then the total disaster in the last three days.

The strong defences at Se La were abandoned by 4 Infantry Division. It withdrew without putting up a fight. It was the same Division which in the Second World War was regarded as the ace division of Allied armies during the North African campaign. It had played a key role in the historic battle of El Alamein. The Chinese pursued the demoralised and routed Division down to the foothills near Tezpur. The war ended with China declaring unilateral cease fires and their withdrawing to the MacMohan Line. The nation's faith in the impregnability of the Himalayas, the infallibility of our foreign policy and the invincibility of our Army lay shattered.

A few weeks before he died, ailing Sardar Patel wrote a very perceptive letter to Jawaharlal Nehru on 17 December 1950, warning him about Chinese intentions and the need to make suitable defence preparations in the Himalayas. Nehru was then in the grip of Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai euphoria. He did not attach much importance to this letter. However, the Minister of State for Defence, Himmat Singhji was asked to chair a committee to examine the issue. His report is not now traceable. It is said that Sardar Patel asked Jai

The Himalayan Debacle

Ram Das Daulat Ram the Governor of Assam and responsible for NEFA, to send a column to establish India's sway over Tawang, which lay South of the MacMohan Line. The Lhasa Government had been collecting revenue from Tawang from before China's occupation of Tibet.

Major Bob Cutting, a brave Naga erstwhile army officer, was then serving in IFAS, later absorbed in IAS. He was then posted at Bomdila and given the task of establishing control over Tawang. He departed with a company of Assam Rifles and a large number of porters for Tawang, along a difficult mountain foot track. It took him nearly two weeks to reach his destination. With a show of force and tact, he got the Tibetan officials to accept Indian control over Tawang. Had he not done so, today Tawang would have today been in occupation of China. Nehru had no prior information of this move and was upset when he heard of it. He felt that it would ruffle diplomatic feathers. Anyway, the deed had been done and he had to reconcile to it.

After the 1962 war, Henderson Brooks-Bhagat report examined the course of operations and the reasons for our debacle. Fifty years have now elapsed and this report is still under wraps. It is generally believed that Neville Maxwell had access to the report. His book, *India's China War*, is based on it. A look at the top personalities involved in the run up to the 1962 disaster is revealing. Jawaharlal Nehru was a great colossus. The people had full faith in his judgement and no one dared express contrary views. Nehru trusted Krishna Menon implicitly and had a blind spot for him. Both Nehru and Menon firmly believed that China will never go to war with India. Menon was said to have been a red card holder. He was a highly intelligent person but very abrasive with his juniors and those who opposed him. As Defence Minister, he would deal directly with junior officers short circuiting the normal chain of command. He had favourites and promoted factionalism. He showed little regard for Service Chiefs. Bholu Nath Mullik was an outstanding Director Intelligence Bureau, whose forte was internal intelligence. He had become the Man Friday of Jawaharlal Nehru. At that time there was no dedicated

organisation for external intelligence.

Adequate military intelligence about China or Tibet was not available. The fact that the Chinese woefully lacked suitable airfields in Tibet was known to US intelligence but we in India were perhaps unaware of this. Mullick had an anti Army bias and fuelled the politician's fear of the man on horseback. The bureaucracy reinforced this for its vested interests, marginalising the military in decision making. The Service Chiefs did not interact directly with the Prime Minister.

Details about senior Army officers at the helm on the eve of the 1962 war and during the course of it, are also relevant. General Thimayya was the Army Chief till a year before that war broke out. He was a very professional and charismatic military leader. He was the only Indian who had commanded a brigade in battle during the Second World War. He did so in the hardest fought Battle of Kangaw in Burma against the Japanese, earning a high gallantry award. In the battle of Zoji La in Kashmir, he used tanks to break through the 10,000 feet high pass. This was the first time in military history that tanks were used at that height. I am an eye witness to Thimayya as the Divisional Commander leading the assault in a tank.

As Chairman of the Neutral Nations Repatriation Commission in Korea, he earned international fame. No General with better credentials had become the Army Chief. Yet Thimayya was not familiar with the ways of politics and politicians. He had strong difference with Krishna Menon which got aggravated by the promotion of Maj Gen Kaul to Lt Gen and his posting as QMG in Army Headquarters against Thimayya's recommendations. Kaul as his Chief of Staff in Korea used to bypass him and exploit his connection with Jawaharlal Nehru. Thimayya's resignation in 1959 caused a nationwide stir. Nehru persuaded him to withdraw his resignation, pointing out that Field Marshal Ayub Khan was transiting through Delhi and his resignation will send out a wrong message, tarnishing India's image. Later Nehru castigated him in the Parliament. He failed to resign over this. This seriously damaged Thimayya's reputation and did immense harm to the Army. Had he resigned again citing lack of

defence preparedness in the Himalayas, things could have been set right and the 1962 war prevented. Instead, he sulked and became a lame duck Chief for his remaining tenure.

General Thapar took over from him and was the Chief during the 1962 war. Lt Gen Thorat was Eastern Army Commander. He had won a gallantry award as a battalion commander in the battle of Kangaw and again in Korea as Commander of the Custodian Force. He wanted to hold a defensive line based on Tawang-Bomdila-Along. These place being at road heads, we would be better placed administratively than the Chinese advancing a hundred miles from the border, dependent on foot or mule tracks in mountainous terrain.

Thorat had planned small listening posts covering the approach tracks near the border. These posts were wire posts to give early warning and not to put up any fight. Well behind this line would be a line of covering troops in good tactical positions to gain time and impose attrition. They were then to withdraw to the well stocked main defences which were to be held at all costs to the last man and defeat the enemy offensive.

Thorat retired a year before the 1962 war. The third General holding a key appointment at that time was Lt Gen L P Sen who had also won a gallantry award commanding a battalion in the battle of Kangaw. On 7 November 1947 as Brigade Commander, he routed the invading Pakistan forces in the decisive battle of Shelatang on the outskirts of Srinagar. That saved Srinagar and liberated the Valley. Over the years his family problems had broken him and he was now a different man. He was Eastern Army Commander during the 1962 war.

Lt Gen Kaul with no combat experience and from a non combat wing service of the Army was appointed the field commander in NEFA to fight the Chinese. During the run up to that war and its conduct, our competent and combat experienced senior military commanders, were rendered ineffective. The individual gallantry of our soldiers in the prevailing circumstances was of no avail. However, under competent military leadership in the West, the Army gave a good account of itself in Ladakh. **Courtesy : Asia Defence News International (ADNI)**

National & International News

SC order on Lodha panel recommendations on BCCI today

PTI New Delhi, July 18: The Supreme Court will today pronounce its order on the issue of implementation of Justice R M Lodha panel recommendations on massive structural reforms in BCCI. A bench of Chief Justice T S Thakur and Justice F M I Kalifulla had reserved its verdict on June 30 after a marathon session of over a dozen hearings.

During the hearing which started in March this year, BCCI had been averse to some of the recommendations of Justice R M Lodha led-panel and had objected

to suggestions like one state-one vote, age and tenure cap on office-bearers and CAG nominee on its board.

The apex court-appointed Lodha Committee had on January 4 recommended sweeping reforms and an administrative shake-up at the troubled BCCI, suggesting that ministers be barred from occupying positions, a cap put on the age and tenure of the office-bearers and legalising betting.

Some of the state cricket associations, former players Kirti Azad, Bishen Singh Bedi and cricket administrators also

approached the apex court with regard to the implementation of Lodha panel recommendations in BCCI.

The three-member panel, also comprising former apex court judges Ashok Bhan and R V Ravendran, had suggested that one unit should represent only one state, while taking away the voting rights of institutional and city-based units. It suggested restructuring of the BCCIs administrative set-up and proposed a CEO to run daily affairs of the Board who will be accountable to a nine-member apex council.

Among the most sensational suggestions of the Lodha panel was the one on legalising betting. It felt that the move would help curb corruption in the game and recommended that except for players and officials, people should be allowed to place bets on registered websites.

Among other steps, the panel said that to ensure transparency in BCCIs functioning, it was important to bring the body under the purview of the RTI Act, something that the Board has vehemently opposed in the past citing autonomy.

RS condemns violence, terror attacks across globe

PTI New Delhi, July 18: Rajya Sabha today condemned "senseless and barbaric" acts of violence in various parts of the world, including France and Bangladesh, and called upon the global community to unitedly combat terrorism.

Rajya Sabha Chairman Hamid Ansari referred to terror attacks in various parts of globe in June and July, which claimed several lives and left several others maimed and injured.

Manifestation of terror in the form of gunfights and bomb explosions

in Istanbul, suicide bomber attacks in Kabul and Baghdad, terror attacks in Nice, Dhaka, Jeddah, Qatif and the holy city of Madinah have stunned the world, he said.

"These senseless and barbaric acts of violence across the world have shaken the conscience of humanity at large and are a grim reminder that the tentacles of terrorism are slowly spreading all over the globe. These growing terror acts are deplorable and deserve to be condemned," Ansari said.

He said such acts only re-affirm "our resolve to fight terrorism with

determination and to reiterate our call to the global community to unitedly combat and eliminate the scourge of terrorism from the world".

The loss of innocent lives and injury to hapless people in all these tragic incidents is indeed outrageous and condemnable, the Chairman said. "This House joins me in expressing our deep sorrow and sympathy and heartfelt condolences on the losses suffered by the friendly people of Turkey, Afghanistan, Iraq, Bangladesh, Saudi Arabia and France and reiterate India's stand

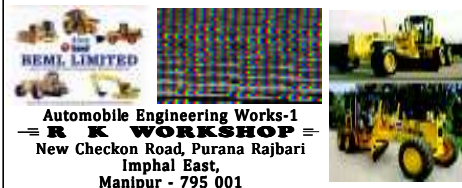
of solidarity with the government and the people of these countries in their hour of grief," he said.

The House also expressed grief over several deaths due to natural calamities like cloudbursts, floods and lightning strikes in Arunachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh and some other parts of the country during June and July.

The members rose in their places and observed silence as mark of respect to the memory of those who lost their lives in these tragedies.

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