

Editorial

Imphal, Tuesday, March 29, 2016

The impact of Globalisation

Globalisation, governed primarily by a market-oriented philosophy, has a number of implications for modes of governance. In the realm of education, the institutions of higher education face new pressures and demands for accountability, access, quality, introduction of new technologies and curriculum. A number of countries have introduced reforms to meet the challenges arising out of such a situation, though the context and nature of reforms vary from one country to another. First, is the concrete references available for post secondary education gave rise to privatisation of higher education.

The protagonists of privatisation see it as an alternative when the supply and demand do not match or when demands are diversified or when public education is seen as not promoting quality. Second, the Governments are under pressure to attract foreign capital; and this means providing a ready supply of skilled labour. This translates into pressure to increase the average level of education in the labour force. The higher level of education are important in a society wherein the economy is becoming more knowledge-based than product-based. Third, there is the closer relationship between the private sector including multinational corporations and the state agencies concerned with product development and innovation.

Further, globalisation should have a profound impact on the production and transmission of knowledge, some have argued that this has not occurred; they are casting doubts on the capacity of globalisation to permeate knowledge production and transmission as per local needs. In the context of Asia, this seems more relevant. Sometimes, we even find people advocating the replacement of textbooks with the motion pictures or instructional television. At another level, even when there were attempts to use modern technology in higher education, it has remained limited to the use of computers. It appears that the educational practices at the classroom level have changed only a little in most developing countries of Asia.

In terms of labour market reforms, the Governments are under pressure to attract foreign capital and this requires a ready supply of skilled labour. Further the shift from manufacturing to the services sector is an important development in the nineties. Thus, the concerns about attaining quality and curricular relevance in higher education with reference to international standards and demands have become prominent. This has placed increased emphasis on mathematics and science in the curriculum, and techno-scientific areas of knowledge. Thus the discourse today is about the skills 'relevant for employment, and enterprise'. In the context of globalisation, two major developments have taken place. One is the inclusion of members of the business houses on the boards of the public universities in order to enhance the industry-institution linkages. This is expected to ensure the relevance of the contents of the curriculum and new academic programmes vis-à-vis the needs of the industry.

The advocates of globalisation today argue for internationalisation of curriculum. For them, a truly global university today is characterized by its engagement with the process of globalisation, its international networks, and its internationalised curriculum. The internationalisation of curriculum entails a complex interplay of history, politics, knowledge production, and its use as well as teaching and learning. All these, however, are influenced by international market conditions and professional orientation. If this is so, the internationalised curriculum involves the development of new skills, attitudes and knowledge among students and teachers alike. It requires creation of new learning practices, spaces, ethos and cultures.

However, there is a danger in such internationalisation of curriculum. For instance, it also means the homogenization of curriculum across all the nations and cultures. This obviously undermines the values of uniqueness and diversity in cultures. This may create conflicts at the local level, which can threaten the social harmony as is evident in some of the South Asian countries. In developing countries such as India, globalisation seems to be increasing the gap between the rich and the poor, thereby aggravating the problems of social inequality, which is also inherent in the education system as well.

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National and International News

SC to hear next week petition challenging President's Rule

PTI New Delhi, March 28: The Supreme Court is all set to hear a PIL challenging imposition of President's Rule in crisis-ridden Uttarakhand next week.

"Let it be listed next week," a bench comprising Chief Justice T S Thakur and Justices R Banumathi and U U Lalit said.

The court's observation came when advocate M L Sharma sought urgent listing of the public interest litigation (PIL) on the issue.

President's Rule was imposed in Uttarakhand on Sunday by the Centre on grounds of 'breakdown of governance' in a controversial

decision that came in wake of a political crisis triggered by a rebellion in the ruling Congress.

Meanwhile, the Congress on Monday said that it was 'ready' for fresh polls in the state and alleged that the BJP toppled the Harish Rawat government, as it feared defeat due to the 'good work' done by the party's government in the state.

The party on Monday challenge to the imposition of President's rule in High Court, accusing the Centre of toppling its government ahead of a floor test in the Assembly.

"What is shocking is that the elections in Uttarakhand are very close by - just six months away, the

BJP in its desperation is trying to topple the Government. We are definitely ready for elections. They were worried for the good work being done there by the Congress government in Uttarakhand and felt that if it is continued, they have no chance of winning," party Spokesman RPN Singh said.

Singh downplayed reports of rebellion in Manipur against the chief minister and practically half of Congress legislators are up in arms against the leadership of Ibobi Singh. On questions about Manipur, he said in many states as well as in central government, there are lot of people who have "dissent" against the

leadership - be it at the Centre or at the State.

"Even the Centre where there is full majority government in Delhi - isn't it that there is a lot of dissent within the BJP, how this government is being run but that does not mean that we use money power and muscle power to bring down the government", he said

Singh alleged that over the last few months the BJP has been dismantling all the democratic Institutions - "be it trampling upon democratically elected governments like what we have seen in Uttarakhand and what happened in Arunachal Pradesh."

Pak joint investigation team heads for Pathankot

PTI Pathankot, March 29: The Pakistani Joint Investigation Team (JIT) accompanied by Indian officials today headed for Pathankot in connection with the probe into the January 2 terror attack at IAF base. The five-member Pakistani team led by Punjab's Additional Inspector General of Police, Counter Terrorism Department, Muhammad Tahir Rai landed at Sri Guru Ramdas International Airport in Amritsar and left for Pathankot by road amid tight security.

JIT and National Investigation Agency (NIA) will take stock of the probe into the Pathankot terror

attack today, officials said. Punjab Police was escorting the convoy of the Pakistani team which also has ISI's Lt Col rank officer Tanvir Ahmed, Lahore's Deputy Director General Intelligence Bureau Mohammad Azim Arshad, Military Intelligence Lt Col Irfan Mirza and Gujranwala CTD Investigating Officer Shahid Talwar.

Police officials said they have diligently barricaded areas around the IAF facility.

"The district police has been informed about the visit and deployments have been done accordingly," a senior police official said.

A large police contingent has been deployed in and around Dhangu village where the IAF base is located.

Meanwhile, Congress workers staged a protest near the air base against the visit by the Pakistani investigators.

Government has made it clear that the Pakistani team will have "restricted" access to the air base with the NIA taking them to a select areas where the over 80-hour gun battle led to the killing of at least four terrorists and seven security personnel.

Orange and blue coloured tarpaulin can be seen draping the interiors of

the strategic facility, in an apparent indication of "visual prohibition" being put in place.

Investigators from India and Pakistan had met in Delhi yesterday. It is for the first time that a Pakistani team has visited the country to probe a terror case.

The opposition parties have slammed the move with Congress saying that "unfettered access" given to Pakistan's JIT by according an almost "red carpet welcome" raised serious questions on procedural propriety in relation to compromise on national security and likened it to an accused investigating himself.

Hijacked Egyptian airliner lands in Cyprus

Egypt, March 29: An Egypt airliner has been hijacked and forced to divert to Larnaca airport on the south coast of Cyprus. The Cyprus Broadcasting Corporation reported that 55 passengers were on board and a crew of seven.

According to BBC, Flight MS181, an Airbus A320 carrying 81 passengers from Alexandria to Cairo, was taken over by at least

one hijacker. A passenger who said he was wearing a suicide belt ordered the flight crew to divert to Cyprus, Egypt Air said. Negotiations are under way but no demands have been made by those in control of the plane, reports say.

A local journalist told the BBC that some passengers had been seen leaving the plane. Cypriot police said those in control of the aircraft



had made no immediate demands after it landed. Larnaca airport

has been closed and scheduled flights diverted elsewhere.

10 convicted, 3 acquitted in Mumbai 2002-2003 blasts cases

ANI Mumbai, March 29: A special Prevention of Terrorism Act (POTA) court on Tuesday convicted ten accused and acquitted three in the triple bomb blasts case that took place in Mumbai between December 2002 and March 2003.

The three acquitted by the court are Nadeem Paloba, Harun Lohar and Adnan Mulla. The ten accused are convicted

under various sections of the POTA, Arms Act, Explosive substances Act and the Railways Act.

The quantum of sentence in the matter will be produced on March 30.

Three bombs exploded in three different parts of the city of Mumbai in a span of a little over three months.

The first blast took place on December 6, 2002, at McDonald's

restaurant on the main building premises of the Mumbai Central railway station.

The second blast occurred on January 27, 2003, in a crowded market in Vile Parle East, while the third blast took place in a jam-packed Karjat-bound local train at the Mulund railway station on March 13, 2003.

As many as 12 persons died in these blasts and 27 were seriously injured.

The Mumbai Police had said the blasts were the handiwork of Students Islamic Movement of India activists who were led by Saquib Nacheen, the former general secretary of the banned outfit.

A total of 16 persons were arrested in the case. Apart from Nacheen, those arrested include Muzammil Ansari, an engineer, and Dr Anwar Ali, a PhD degree holder who taught Urdu at National Defence Academy, Pune.

Four-year-old girl beheaded in Taiwan knife attack

Taiwan, March 29: A four-year-old girl was beheaded in Taiwan in what appears to have been a random knife attack, state media said.

On Monday morning, a 33-year-old man attacked the girl with a cleaver in full view of her mother as they were on their way to a metro station in Taipei, the island's capital, the official Central News Agency (CNA) said. The mother of the slain child said

her daughter had been riding her bike about a meter away from her when it became stuck.

She saw the man approaching and at first thought he was going to help her daughter but he drew his knife and decapitated her.

"I saw the suspect slashing my daughter with a cleaver. I immediately grabbed him but I could not pull him away," she said. Bystanders heard her screams for

help and rushed to restrain the attacker until police arrived.

An initial investigation found that the suspect, identified only by his surname Wang, waited near the metro station after allegedly purchasing the knife at a supermarket earlier that day. Citing police, CNA said the man had a history of mental illness and had received treatment at a psychiatric hospital. The suspect was detained at a

police station, where a large angry crowd gathered. Officers attempted to escort him out of the building, still with blood splashed across his face, but several people rushed the suspect, eventually forcing police to take him back inside.

In 2014, a 21-year-old Taiwanese man Cheng Chieh went on a mass stabbing spree on the Taipei metro system, killing four people and injuring 24 more.

Myanmar lifts state of emergency in troubled Rakhine state

Yangon, March 29: Myanmar's outgoing government on Tuesday lifted a state of emergency in conflict-ridden Rakhine, a parting gesture that coincides with turbulent relations between Aung San Suu Kyi's new administration and the western state's powerful Buddhist political party.

Rakhine is deeply scarred by communal violence between Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims that began in 2012, presenting one of the most acute challenges for Myanmar's first popularly elected government in decades.

In a surprise move Tuesday outgoing president Thein Sein announced the removal of the emergency order,

which had been in place since unrest left scores dead and tens of thousands of Rohingya Muslims confined to miserable displacement camps.

"According to the Rakhine State government, there is currently no threat of danger to people's lives," said a statement in state media announcing the order, which will see the military step back from providing day-to-day security in the region.

While Rakhine has not seen a serious outbreak of violence in more than two years, the state remains fractured on religious lines. Most Muslims are trapped either in camps or in heavily regulated areas near the border with Bangladesh. A rising tide of Buddhist nationalism

in Myanmar has fuelled discrimination against the Muslim minority, seen by many as illegal immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh.

A web of citizenship rules has rendered many Rohingya effectively stateless and unable to vote in last November's landmark polls. Tens of thousands have fled persecution and poverty for neighbouring countries like Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia. But the tide appears to have slowed this year after a Thai crackdown on people-smuggling in 2015 led boat captains to abandon many Rohingya on land and at sea, spurring a regional crisis.

"We think the situation is good. But any politician can see that Rakhine State is very sensitive and it would be easy for it to explode at any time," said Aye Maung, chairman of the Arakan National Party (ANP), which represents ethnic Rakhine Buddhists. The president's order comes a day after Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy faced protests by lawmakers from the ANP — one of Myanmar's strongest minority parties — over the NLD decision to appoint a candidate from its own party to be the state's chief minister. Around 18 ANP lawmakers, many wearing black stickers on their jackets, walked out of the Rakhine regional legislature Monday.