

Editorial

Diverting the realities

Times are a changing as everything ought to. Stuffs that were not even dreamt about are becoming devices and gadgets for everyday use. The peace of development and inventions is increasing at a dizzying pace and in an unbelievably complex manner. Every single gene in the human body can be identified, isolated and manipulated. Electricity can be transmitted without any wires or cables. Cars that run for more than a thousand kilometers with only a gallon of fuel is no more a fantasy today. Space travel or space tourism is here. Humans with embedded microchips can now manipulate and control his environment, well almost, as of now. Research and development in every field, being aided by sophisticated computers and robots, have quickened their pace and shortened their observation periods, leading to quicker results. It would not be much off the mark to say that the world as we know today is undergoing a paradigm shift in the way we live our lives. Through these radical changes and developments, one thing has withstood the test of time, proving to be an unseen and unaccounted yet determining factor that could make or mar everything else the human mentality.

The workings of the human mind emotions and feelings that cannot be quantitatively ascertained or expressed as an exactable scientific expression or equation, has remained an enigma a mystery that has not been unravelled till date. Here in lies the genesis of every conflict and differences. Societies created laws and statutes based on the greater good of the citizens, and a system of checks and balances to arbitrate, enforce and amend them. It is a perfect set up on paper. Unfortunately, the better reality is so far removed from the system so envisaged. We, the ordinary citizens are arrested and harassed for raising our voice against what we feel is unjust and wrong even threatened and shot by those who purpose to serve our motherland, whatever form that might take. The powers that be proclaims to work according to the wishes of the people, while the voice is subdued with threats and intimidation, or worse still, let the voice die out and be forgotten with time. And who are we to turn to for help when the terrorists are the army and police who are drug traffickers who are extortionists who are the influential and powerful?

For us mere mortals, complaints and appeals entail the inherent risk of losing limb and life. Is what we are experiencing a replica of the so called jungle law? I'd like to think that a jungle law would be a far better option each one would then have a place in the set up. But then again, we are born equal. A prime minister is as human as a sweeper or a carpenter or a scientist. Each one is doing their bit for the society.

The president of India or the Chief Minister of Manipur needs a weaver to weave a piece of fabric which will be sewn into a cloth by a tailor and sold at the market form where it will be brought for his use. We need to accept and embrace one another as our equals. The powerful ones wouldn't have had a concrete mansion to hide within were it not for the masons and plumbers.

By : Puja Mehra

Sardar Patel dominated Indian politics from 1917 to 1950. First, he was at the forefront of the freedom struggle. Then, after Independence in 1947, as Deputy Prime Minister, he held the crucial portfolios of Home, States and Information and Broadcasting. The 'Iron Man' and a founder of modern India, he restructured the Indian bureaucracy after the transfer of large number of officials to Pakistan, integrated the princely States into the Indian union, and had an important role in shaping the Indian Constitution.

Following territorial consolidation, the immediate goal was for the Government, industrialists and labour to participate in a great national effort for recovery and reconstruction. The objective was to bring an improvement in the living standards of countrymen. The British had taken what they had to, leaving behind, in his words, only their statues. Many of the instruments of economic control that had been put in place by the British government to gear the Indian economy towards the war effort were still operating. So, imports remained severely restricted, and foreign currency earned from India's exports for the war had still not been transferred by the Bank of England to the Reserve Bank of India. As a result, a sizeable sterling balance had accumulated, but war-damaged England was in no position to settle the dues. Inflation had spiralled out of control. Speaking at the meeting of Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC) at Indore in May 1949, Sardar Patel declared his intention of rejuvenating the Indian economy. He said, "Our long period of slavery and the years of the recent war have drained the life-blood of our economy. Now that we have taken over power, onus is on us to rejuvenate it; new blood has to be poured in drop by drop."

Partition added to the vulnerabilities and thus restoring business

Sardar Patel's Economic Ideas

confidence was paramount. Ahead of Partition, Calcutta's worried businessmen had wanted to move out of the city that they had operated out for generations. Sardar took the lead in dissuading them and asked them to stay on. He said in Kolkata, "I advised them to stay on because I was certain that no power on earth could take Calcutta away from India." The factories there had been dependent on jute grown in what was now Pakistan. The neighbour refused to honour agreements; even jute that had been paid for in advance was not delivered. Sardar Patel realised that India had no time to lose and gave a call for self-sufficiency. Speaking at a public event in Delhi in January 1950, he asserted, "If they cannot guarantee to implement agreements, we had better not depend on them. Let us grow the jute and cotton and the food grains we need."

Sardar Patel's thoughts and approach to India's economic challenge were shaped, to a great extent, by the historical setting at that time and also by his role of a nation-builder and a founder of India's political democracy. Self-reliance was among the chief tenets of his economic philosophy, on which, his views were closer to those of Pandit Nehru than Mahatma Gandhi's, who championed self-sufficiency at the village level. The role he envisaged for the government was that of a welfare state, but realised that other countries had taken up the task at more advanced stages of development. He was impressed with the slogans raised for socialism, and spoke often of the need for India to create wealth before debating over what to do with it, how to share it. Nationalisation he rejected completely; clear that industry ought to be the sole preserve of the business community. Nor was he a great believer in planning, especially of the kind practised in the developed and industrialised countries.

He was not for controls. The indifference was, in part, because there simply wasn't enough staff to implement them. He was working with an administration capacity depleted owing to the departure of a disproportionate number of officers that had opted to go to Pakistan and the posting of senior civil servants in the newly-established embassies across the world. Addressing the Chief Ministers of the States in April, 1950 he said, "We run the administration of the country with one-fourth of the service which was in existence when we took over. Fifty percent of the people whose presence was enough to keep law and order and make subordinates work with efficiency, and even overtime, are gone."

To him, the profit motive was a great stimulant to exertion, not a stigma. He wholly approved of it, and advocated it for even the non-capitalist classes, the middle classes, the labour and even the agriculturists. That does not mean he did not recognise concentration of wealth as a social problem and unethical. He did, and in fact, appealed for a higher sense of civic consciousness and national duty to transcend all motives. His argument was that it was not merely ethical and patriotic, but even economically pragmatic, to channelise hoarded wealth in economic undertakings, where the returns were certain to be richer. Besides, what good could the stashes be if the country's economic problems led to chaos. He constantly advised against greed. To the labour, he said, participate in creating wealth before claiming a just share, and advocated Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy on labour-employer relationships. The Mahatma's methods, he said, could bring labour its legitimate reward through constitutional means. He wanted to see India industrialise quickly. The imperative being to reduce dependence on external resources. A modern army required equipment that only machines could produce: apart from arms and

ammunition, uniforms and stores, jeeps and motor cars, aeroplanes and petrol. But machinery was not going to solve the "great disease" of idleness in the thickly populated country. "Millions of idle hands that have no work cannot find employment on machines", he said while addressing the Chief Ministers' meet in April 1950. Being primarily a farming country, agricultural revival was of primary importance. His promise to industry was for no "impediments, bottle-necks or red-tape" as he said in a radio broadcast on Pandit Nehru's birthday on 14th November 1950.

In the same broadcast, he championed investment-led growth and said, "Spend less, save more, and invest as much as possible should be the motto of every citizen." He appealed to every segment of the society - lawyers, farmers, labours, traders, businessmen and government servants for saving every 'anna' that could be spared and to place their savings in the hands of the government for utilisation in nation-building enterprises. In the same address, he emphasised on saving every spare penny and said, "We must have capital, and that capital must come from our own country. We may be able to borrow from international markets here and there, but obviously we cannot base our everyday economy on foreign borrowing." This was a call for voluntary savings, and for savers to choose their preferred means of investment.

Sardar Patel's approach was balanced, pragmatic and liberal. Economics was an "intensely practical science" for him. Short cuts and arbitrary policies of temporary palliatives or artificial reductions in prices or stimulation of investment were not acceptable to him. He wanted Indian economy built on surer foundations of increased production, industrial and agricultural, and increased wealth. Puja Mehra is a Delhi-based journalist.

More State news

AR organised free veterinary camp at Sagolmang

Imphal, Oct 28: 17 Assam Rifles of 10 Sector Assam Rifles under the aegis of IGAR (South) organised veterinary camp at village Khewa Company of Imphal East district on October 23. The camp was organised with an aim to provide free veterinary medicine and vaccines to domestic animals of Khewa Company and adjoining villages. The animals & cattle are the major sources of income to the villagers & in the absence of a veterinary hospital/clinic in the vicinity, they have been approaching the unit for assistance. Veterinary Team of 14 Mobile Field Veterinary Hospital consisting of two Nursing Assistants provided the veterinary cover. The camp drew an overwhelming response from the locals who turned out in large numbers

to get specialized treatment for their cattle.

A total of 562 animals including cattle, goats & dogs were treated, consulted and free vet medicine and vaccines were distributed. The local people of the area were highly appreciative of the conduct of the Veterinary Camp. The villagers of Khewa Company and adjoining villages thanked the 17 Assam Rifles for organizing the above camp. The occasion was also utilized by the local village head and other prominent members of the village to speak to the people urging them to maintain mutual tolerance and extend their whole hearted support to the government & the security forces in their fight for bringing back normalcy in the region.

National & International News

Missing Kashmir cop suspected of joining LeT after his photo holding an AK-47 surfaces

HT Srinagar, Oct. 28: A Jammu and Kashmir police constable is suspected to have joined the militant Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) in what could be the third such switch by a security personnel in the Valley this year.

Police ordered a probe after the constable, Isfaq Ahmad Dar, last week announced on social media that he has joined the LeT, a Pakistan-based militant outfit blamed for several terror attacks in India.

A photograph of Dar holding an AK-47 assault rifle was also widely circulated on social media and messaging apps in the Valley over the past few days.

"There are reports we are trying to confirm. The matter is being investigated," state police chief SP Vaid told Hindustan Times on Saturday. He added that police are yet trying to "know the facts". Many in Dar's family, including his brother, are policemen, sources said.

More than 1,500 police personnel have been killed in the valley since insurgency broke out in 1989. In June, a deputy superintendent of police - Mohammed Ayub Pandith - was lynched by a mob outside Srinagar's main mosque.

In recent months, several policemen have been killed or attacked and their homes ransacked by suspected militants, seen as warnings to local police personnel to stop participating in counter-insurgency operations. Six policemen including an officer were also killed in a militant ambush earlier this year.

Sources said Dar was shifted from Kargil to Kathua in July after adverse reports about his alleged "militant sympathies".

"He was under police radar but we can't arrest a person unless he does something," a senior police officer said.

Dar, from a village in Shopian, had left his home to report back to duty last week.

When he did not reach Kathua, family lodged a missing person report. Soon after, the photograph of Dar surfaced on social media.

In May, a constable from Shopian, Syed Naveed Mushtaq, decamped with four service rifles and joined the militant group Hizbul Mujahideen.

Two months later, Zahoore Ahmad Thokar - who was with the 173 Territorial Army Engineering

regiment at Baramulla - deserted his unit along with his service AK-47 and three magazines and joined militant ranks.

Such incidents were first reported in 2015 when two policemen - Naseer Ahmad Pandith from Shopian and Syed Raqib Bashir from Pulwama - joined the Hizbul Mujahideen, then led by former commander Burhan Wani, whose killing last year sparked months-long unrest in Kashmir.

Both of them were killed in separate encounters with security forces. In early 2016, Shakoore Ahmad Parry of Shopian, a security guard to a police officer in Bijbehara, was arrested by police after he had ran away with four rifles to join a militant group.

Police said such incidents are rare

and that most of the deserters are from South Kashmir, where anti-India sentiments run deep.

"Most of the policemen are from a particular patch in South Kashmir, mostly Pulwama and Shopian. They were recruited between 2010 and 2012 and may be not much background check was done," a police official said.

"They are not radicalised... If they are radicalised they are capable of inflicting more damage in the forces... we have to keep our eyes open and our house clean," the officer added.

Kashmir's police force is hailed for its professionalism as its personnel are often forced to act against civilians, sometimes even minors, involved in protests and vandalism.

Chennai SIMS doctor conducted media clinic

Guwahat, Oct 28: Acclaimed gastro surgeon Dr Patta Radhakrishna from SIMS Hospital, Chennai conducted the weekly evening OPD clinic at Guwahati Press Club on 27 October, where the practicing doctor advised over 15 media persons on various relevant ailments. Binay Hatikakoti, a SIMS official in northeast India assisted in conducting the health camp.

Organised under the 'Evening with a Doctor' program for the benefit of press club members along with their dependants, the 21 October camp was attended by well known medicine specialist Dr Brajendra Lahkar from Dispur Hospital. The participants also got the

opportunity to check their weight, blood pressure & sugar, bone density and pulmonary functions in the camp Launched in August 2016 with initial supports from Dr Jayanta Bardoloi, managing director of Dispur Hospital in raising a doctor's chamber at the press club premises, the series of camps have emerged as a 'healthy & rewarding hangout' for the media persons. Many working journalists with high blood pressure & sugar were usually diagnosed in the previous camps and they were advised for follow up actions.

Till date, practicing physicians from Apollo Chennai Hospital, Manipal Bangalore Hospital, Fortis Hospital

Bangalore, Medanta the Medicity Hospital, Down Towan Hospital, GNRC Hospitals, Hayat Hospital, Ayursundra Hospital, Nmcare Hospital, Sun Valley Hospital, Sight First Eye-Clinic, Barthakur Clinic, Wintrobe Hospital etc have attended the camps.

Even though the camps are primarily organised for the benefit of press club members with their close relatives, any journalist of the region (also the country) with their family members may take the advantage of the clinics, said a statement from the pioneer press club of northeast India adding that similar initiatives are also encouraged in other parts of the region.

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