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Lead Essay

Are Start-up Companies Really The Way Forward for Long-Term Job Creation?

NASSCOM (the apex body for software and software services providers in the country) has said that India is the world's third largest start-up ecosystem, with more than 4,200 registered new-age companies.¹ However, it is the "Unicorns" (a term used for start-ups valued at a \$1 billion or more) like Flipkart, Ola and InMobi that are seen to represent a whole industry segment in terms of the sheer success they have been, both from the entrepreneurs and employees point of view.

Young people are increasingly choosing start-ups as their first choices when they participate in campus recruitments, as job with these companies combine strong compensation with the thrill of doing creative work, in a sunrise industry, that allows them to believe that they are more than simply a cog in the wheel. This is borne out by a recent media report which stated that more than 10 percent of the 9,000 plus students graduating from IITs this year will most likely take up employment in start-ups. According to a leading media daily, anecdotal evidence suggests that consulting firms, fast moving consumer goods companies, information technology services firms are all losing talent to start-ups. Their competitive salaries, ESOPs (Employment Stock Ownership Plan), opportunities of assuming greater responsibilities early on in the career and the vast umbrella of learning is what makes their job offer an exciting package.²

At the macro level, according to Census 2011, 120 million people are "seeking or available for work". A majority of this population comprised of youth, particularly educated youth.³ So when Prime Minister Modi initiated the 'Start-up India, Stand-up India' campaign he was clearly following through on one of his campaign promises and addressing this aspirational section of our society.

Why is it then that leading colleges of the country like IIT-Bombay, IIM-Calcutta are screening start-ups minutely before involving them in campus placements? And why have students begun to think twice before they take up a job offered by a start-up?

The Start-up Culture of Lay-offs

When an ace educational institution decided to vet the credentials of the start-up companies (checking annual balance sheets for the past three years) that arrived on its campus for placement it begs the question, what would have prompted this screening?⁴ Doesn't every institution vie to get these companies for campus placement? Then how can start-ups, with their promises of job creation for this country getting younger by the year, be doubted?

According to a recent survey about 3,270 employees have been fired from a total of 20 start-ups in the past six months. This number represents 18 percent of the total employee base of the firms scrutinised.⁵ TinyOwl, a rapidly developing online food delivery start-up company has already laid off over a hundred employees twice this year. So much was the angst of those who were fired without adequate notice period and through no fault of theirs that they took the co-

¹ 'The Dark Side of the Start-up Story', <http://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/the-dark-side-of-the-startup-story/article7930542.ece>, The Hindu, November 30, 2015. Accessed on 25.12.2015

² 'Why IIT-ians are Lapping Up Job Offers from Tech Start-ups', <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/tech/jobs/Why-IITians-are-lapping-up-job-offers-from-tech-startups/articleshow/46211625.cms>, The Times of India, February 12, 2015. Accessed on 28.12.2015

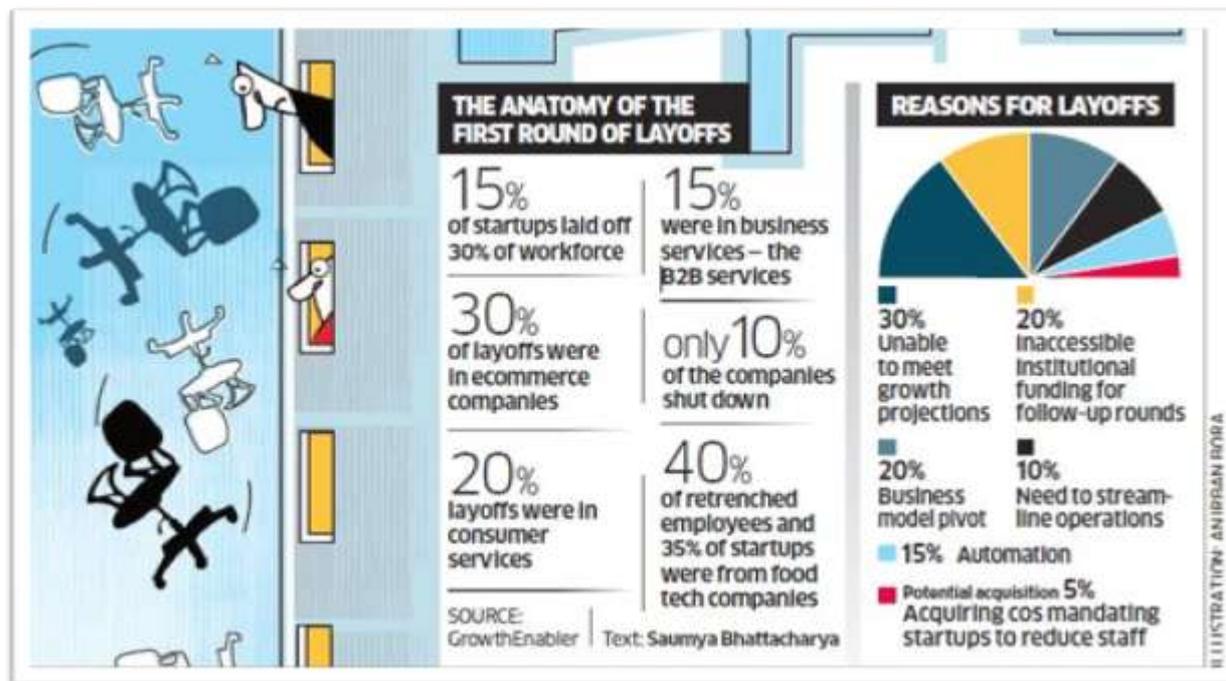
³ 'Worryingly High Number of Job Seekers aged 20-29', <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Worryingly-high-number-of-job-seekers-aged-20-29/articleshow/50290634.cms>, The Times of India, December 23, 2015. Accessed on 27.12.2015

⁴ 'Campus Jobs Wary of Hype, IIT-Bombay Screens Start-ups', <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/campus-jobs-wary-of-hype-iit-bombay-screens-start-ups/>, The Indian Express, December 2, 2015. Accessed on 24.12.2015

⁵ 'Rising Layoffs Can be a Sign of India's Start-ups Maturing', http://articles.economictimes.indiatimes.com/2015-12-11/news/68959970_1_startups-layoffs-ecosystem, The Economic Times, December 11, 2015. Accessed on 24.12.2015

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founder of the start-up as hostage at their Pune office. The matter was resolved only after police intervention.⁶ Further, Housing.com another start-up for sale and rent of housing spaces recently laid off 600 employees.⁷



This practice of mass laying off is attributed to the dynamic pace of working, unique to start-ups. It is also considered to a large extent to be inevitable since the business model adopted when the operations begin may not subsist throughout. As business models change employees are fired. The pace of growth of a start-up is too rapid. Since they are formed to satisfy a very specific demand of the consumers- be it taxi hailing, food offerings or providing home cleaning services. Even a little slack in operations can have major financial ramification for the start-up. Therefore, the business model seems to be largely dependent upon the ability to quickly ramp up or reduce costs of labour and other factors of production.

Venture capitalists and seed funds/ investors interested in early/strong returns on their investments also add pressure and drive these businesses where long term capacity building is often not a part of the business strategy. According to Ravi Gururaj, NASSCOM product and executive council, start-ups fire employees under three circumstances: they don't have money and want to raise funds; they don't plan properly and over hire, or they hire the wrong talent.⁸ A possible explanation for this spree of over-hiring could be the fact that start-ups right in the initial stages of their operation have expanding rapidly as their driving force rather than achieving stability. The most obvious consequence of this act in the long run is a high attrition rate.

⁶ 'When a Hostage Crisis Ruffled Feathers at TinyOwl', http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/when-a-hostage-crisis-ruffled-feathers-at-tinyowl-115110600417_1.html, The Business Standard, November 6, 2015. Accessed on 24.12.2015

⁷ 'Big Layoffs at India's Online Start-ups', <http://www.hindustantimes.com/tech/big-layoffs-at-india-s-online-start-ups-is-the-bubble-bursting/story-YvFCvjyYtu88JyWZ3vdj6K.html>, The Hindustan Times, November 22, 2015. Accessed on 24.12.2015

⁸ 'The Truth About Hiring and Firing in the Start-up World', <http://www.stratos-invest.in/the-truth-about-hiring-and-firing-in-the-startup-world/>, Stratos, October 19, 2015. Accessed on 25.12.2015

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Start-ups: The Solution to India's Job Crisis?

Prime Minister Modi sees start-ups as an effective instrument for creation of jobs for the youth.⁹ In his last 'Mann ki Baat' radio session for this year he paints a rosy picture where entrepreneurship opportunities and jobs created by start-up companies are going to save the day-

"Can India be a 'Start-up Capital'? Can the youth in the states have the opportunities in the form of start-ups, with innovations, whether it be manufacturing, service sector or agriculture? In everything, there should be freshness, new ways, new thinking. The world cannot move ahead without innovation.....on January 16, the government of India will unveil the full Action Plan of Start-up India, Stand-up India. A structure will be presented before you. This programme will be connected to the country's IITs, IIMs, central universities and NITs. Wherever there are youth, they will be linked through 'live connectivity.'"¹⁰

But are start-ups really the solution to India's job crisis? Pitted against the 'mundane' corporate jobs, a life at a start-up is painted in a rosy manner that would work well for both, the job seeker and the government that has job promises to keep. Even more so in case of India where start-ups are being hailed as the panacea for growth by all and sundry especially the present government. However, a multi-country wide study conducted by Stanford Graduate School of Business postulates otherwise.

After gathering data on more than 158,000 start-ups worldwide, tracking each company for five years it was found that while some young firms enjoy significant revenue and job growth, those gains are substantially offset by losses in other firms. Among companies in their fifth year, for example, total job destruction amounted to 65 percent of all the new jobs created in that year. The question this study poses is whether the aim of public policy must be to allow for start-ups to crop up easily or ensure their sustenance in the long run.¹¹

Further, the germ of a successful start-up is in a great idea for it. But more often than not there are a number of start-ups working with the same idea. A good example of this is the sector of food delivery start-ups which is currently over exposed to penetration by start-ups. While all food delivery start-ups at the time of their inception surely must have created jobs, but only a few of them survive their competition and the rest-Dazo, Langhar, SpoonJoy- shut down. As they do that they also bring down with them all of whom they have employed. The same facts can be replicated for various other sectors too. Hence, in the absence of a strong national social security system and a society where professional failure is not accepted easily, the stability of the jobs created by start-ups is highly questionable.

The New Start-Up Policy: Promises Stability?

Keeping in mind the inherent business models of most start-ups and also the current trend of them firing their employees, it seems that start-ups can't really deliver stable jobs. As mentioned earlier, the government has announced that it would be unveiling a new policy for start-ups next month. The aim of this policy shall be 'to boost innovation, entrepreneurship and creating jobs'. Considerable focus will be given to increase the number of angel investors within India so that start-ups are encouraged to solve domestic problems within the country rather than focus on profiteering

⁹ 'Start-ups can be Engine of Growth, Help Create Jobs: Modi', http://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/startups-can-be-engine-of-growth-help-create-jobs-modi-115092800113_1.html, The Business Standard, September 28, 2015. Accessed on 25.12.2015

¹⁰ 'Action Plan to be Unveiled on Start-up India on Jan 16: PM Modi', <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-news-india/action-plan-on-startup-india-to-be-unveiled-on-jan-16-pm-modi/>, The Indian Express, December 27, 2015. Accessed on 27.12.2015

¹¹ 'George Foster: Are Start-ups Really Job Engines?', <http://forbesindia.com/article/stanford/george-foster-are-startups-really-job-engines/41489/1>, Forbes India, November 16, 2015. Accessed on 25.12.2015

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because of investors from abroad.¹² Is regulation of the start-ups in order to ensure their stability also an agenda that is being considered by the formulating committee? Since no media report has indicated any such stipulation, only time will tell if the policy takes care of this nuance. But the fact that it should is undeniable.

Students who opt for start-ups in their campus placement are not deluded by a happily ever after employment story. Reports suggest that they are aware of the risks they are required to take. While students in a campus placement are in a position to garner information about the financial health of a start-up, the public at large may not. Post the formulation of the start-up policy a possible boost in the coming up of start-ups is suggested and aimed for. There is no certainty that they will be ensured a long-term, stable job. In order to allow people to make an informed decision effort has to be made so as to ensure that a potential job seeker is aware of the risk he is undertaking.

Start-ups: Favourable for Investors and Founders but What About Employees?

Various media reports and the government push the idea of having more start-ups. The recent NASSCOM report ranks India third on the global list of countries with most start-ups. At the same time there is no study undertaken to keep a count of the number of start-ups that have failed. The global estimate is that three out of four start-ups end within two years. This trend is not so alarming because the presumption with a start-up venture is that failure is the best teacher. Failed start-up founders are valued for their experience by investors and encouraged to begin again.¹³ But in this process jobs are lost for it is difficult to absorb employees of particular skill sets into another start-up that may not require that particular skill set.

While the innovators and entrepreneurs are in a win-win situation if start-ups are encouraged, what is the fate of those who form the labour force once the start-up falls apart?

A recent case in point was the experience of the employees of Good Technology, a mobile start-up in California. It was sold to BlackBerry for half the worth of the company's worth according to its private valuation. To make matters worse the employees were paying taxes from their own accounts for their shares in the company since Good Technology was a 'unicorn' (a private company with a valuation more than \$1 billion) with a high net worth. The senior executives and investors were protected by their preferred stock of shares with a guaranteed payout. In a start-up these benefits do not trickle to the employees who also undertake a risk and hence they are the hardest hit.¹⁴

Does the start-up culture tilt towards benefitting the investors and the entrepreneurs as compared to the employees? Is it then only a policy to attract investment and profit those in the higher echelons of the start-up rather than create long term opportunities for employment?

The Way Forward

Long term 'job creation' is crucial for the economy today. While it is heartening to see that the Modi government is looking at a strong policy response to this issue, in the form of the "Start-Up Policy", it seems like the policy is focused on improving the eco-system for the entrepreneurs and investors and is ignoring the needs of employees, the larger section of India's young population. In a country with no social security, a policy that 'encourages' a labour market where young people will see sporadic employment opportunities as start-ups respond to customer demand cycles, there

¹² 'Start-up Policy in New Year', <http://www.thehindu.com/business/Industry/startup-policy-in-new-year/article7955264.ece>, The Hindu, December 7, 2015. Accessed on 26.12.2015

¹³ 'Indian Entrepreneurs Start Again After Failed Ventures', http://www.business-standard.com/article/companies/indian-entrepreneurs-start-again-after-failed-ventures-115100800898_1.html, The Business Standard, October 10, 2015. Accessed on 27.12.2015

¹⁴ 'When a Unicorn Start-up Stumbles, Its Employees Get Hurt', <http://www.nytimes.com/2015/12/27/technology/when-a-unicorn-start-up-stumbles-its-employees-get-hurt.html?smid=tw-share&r=0>, The New York Times, December 23, 2015. Accessed on 27.12.2015

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is need for caution. Merely getting hired, to be fired in a few months as mushrooming entrepreneurial ventures fizzle out in a few years, cannot be a strategy for long term job creation. In order for us to respond to the needs of our young people and benefit from the much talked about population dividend, all stakeholders must be addressed by policy and encouragement to start-ups has to be backed up with policy response for the job seekers too.

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Headlines

32 Percent Indian Women Suffer From Miscarriages

(The Telegraph, December 28, 2015)

No study of women's health in India produces a reassuring report. A recent study shows that 32 per cent of Indian women suffer miscarriages, especially in first-time pregnancies, while the global rate for this is 10 per cent. In the first place, the figure is staggeringly high. Even the figures for recurrent spontaneous miscarriage, though lower, are alarming: 7.46 per cent for Indian women against 0.8-1.4 per cent globally. Yet the responses to the reasons given for the high percentage of miscarriages are puzzling. Structural defects in the women's uterus and genetic history of infections such as tuberculosis seem to be the doctors' choice of reasons.

Read more: http://www.telegraphindia.com/1151228/jsp/opinion/story_60687.jsp#.VoEAnf197IU

Date Accessed: 28.12.2015

Govt Draft Guidelines for Kidney Donation

(Free Press Journal, January 02, 2016)

The ministry of Health and Family Welfare has uploaded a draft guidelines for kidney donation on NOTTO website to invite suggestions from public and stakeholders. Suggestion can be sent to the NOTTO (National Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation) till January 16, 2016. The draft guidelines include various issues including recipient registration, listing and scoring system in the waiting list, allocation principles and algorithm, including criteria for urgent listing and inter-state issues." The Union Health Minister Mr. J.P. Nadda said, "This initiative reflects our commitment to promote organ donation in the country. We will finalise these guidelines after we receive various suggestions and comments on these draft guidelines. "Once finalised, these guidelines will go a long way in promoting organ donation in the country.

Read More: <http://www.freepressjournal.in/govt-draft-guidelines-for-kidney-donation/748245>

Date Accessed: 03.01.2016

Governance & Development

The Year Dissent Came to the Forefront

(*The Livemint*, December 28, 2015)

The National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government, which came to power on a popular mandate, has faced several sporadic uprisings against some of its crucial policy decisions. From farmers and farm labourers protesting against the controversial land acquisition bill, dharnas by retired defence personnel over the delay in rolling out the One Rank One Pension (OROP) scheme, opposition parties impacting the legislative business of both Houses of Parliament by virtually stalling crucial bills, and a series of intellectuals and artists returning their awards to protest against the alleged 'rising intolerance' in the country, many people had a reason to express dissent.

Read more: <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/ZniXkCgWbBKWW2E2HudqOL/The-year-dissent-came-to-the-forefront.html>

Date Accessed: 28.12.2015

What is the Cost of Providing One Rupee of Support to the Poor?

(Suman Chakrabarti, *The Economic and Political Weekly*, December 26, 2015)

The enduring equity-efficiency debate on India's food policy revolves around two key issues—leakage of cereal grains from the system, and reduction in benefits at the extensive margin to reduce the fiscal burden. Using descriptive analysis and costing techniques, it is found that the public distribution system works well in regions with low market access, high cereal prices, and high poverty. Overall, it is found that inclusivity and the possibility of leakage reduction, thereof, has the potential to deliver a net gain of \$1 billion in social welfare from the status quo.

Read more: <http://www.epw.in/journal/2015/52/special-articles/what-cost-providing-one-rupee-support-poor.html#sthash.275SSs8V.dpuf>

Date Accessed: 28.12.2015

All in the Spirit of Equality

(Suhrit Parthasarathy, *The Hindu*, January 4, 2016)

As virtually its last significant act of 2015, on December 29, the Supreme Court of India delivered its judgment on the validity of Kerala's newest liquor policy, which seeks to prohibit the sale and service of alcohol in all public places, save bars and restaurants in five-star hotels. Regardless of what our respective moral positions on policies of prohibition might be, and regardless of the potential efficacy of such programmes, the new law, as is only plainly evident, militates against the fundamental promise of equal concern and treatment under the Constitution. In placing five-star hotels on a pedestal, the law takes a classist position, and commits a patent discrimination that is really an affront to the underlying principles of our democracy. Regrettably, though, the Supreme Court's judgment, in *The Kerala Bar Hotels Association v. State of Kerala*, eschews even the most basic doctrines of constitutionalism, and, in so doing, allows the state to perpetrate a politics of hypocrisy.

Prohibition often has a polarising effect on the polity. But the criticisms of the ineffectuality of such policies apart, Kerala's new law ought to have been seen for what it is: paternalism, at its best, and, at its worst, an extension of an ingrained form of classism that is demonstrably opposed to the guarantee of equality under our Constitution. The judgment in *The Kerala Bar Hotels Association* case is therefore deeply unsatisfactory, and requires reconsideration.

Read more: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/keralas-liquor-policy-all-in-the-spirit-of-equality/article8061657.ece?homepage=true>

Date Accessed: 04.01.2016

GOVERNMENT

Governance & Development

LPG-like DBT Kerosene Scheme from April: Govt

(Free Press Journal, January 02, 2016)

“After the success of paying subsidy to LPG users in their bank accounts, the government will from April 1 roll out a similar programme for kerosene where the users will buy the cooking fuel at market rate but will get financial support directly in their bank accounts. The cash subsidy to be paid to users will be equivalent to the difference between current PDS price of about Rs 12 and market rate of Rs 43 per litre. The move will help curtail subsidy outgo for kerosene, which in 2014-15 was about Rs 24,799 cr.” an official said, “Several state governments have come forward to implement direct benefit transfer (DBT) in kerosene in selected districts.”

Read more: <http://www.freepressjournal.in/lpg-like-dbt-kerosene-scheme-from-april-govt/748215>

Date Accessed: 03.01.2016

DEFENCE

Ex-Servicemen Meet Arun Jaitley, Seek Changes in OROP Notification

(The Asian Age, January 4, 2016)

A delegation of ex-servicemen met Finance Minister Arun Jaitley on Sunday and submitted a memorandum seeking "corrections" in the One Rank One Pension (OROP) notification, as their protest on the issue entered the 203rd day.

"For last 6 months, our ex-servicemen are protesting at Jantar Mantar demanding OROP which has been passed by both Houses of Parliament. But the government has been neglecting our demands again and again. It is our request to give us our real OROP," Arif Ali Khan, one of the protesters, said.

Another veteran Lieutenant Kameshwar Pandey said, "We feel cheated as this is not the real OROP what government has promised. A proper parliamentary procedure must be followed to make any amendments. We just want the government to refrain from such manipulations".

Read More: <http://www.asianage.com/india/ex-servicemen-meet-arun-jaitley-seek-changes-orop-notification-407>

Date Accessed: 04.01.2016

India and World

INDIA IN THE WORLD

'Honour Your Own Visas,' Says India as US Clarifies on Deportation of Indians

(*The Times of India*, December 30, 2015)

The ministry of external affairs (MEA) has said that it has asked US officials to honour the visas issued by their own embassies and consulates. The MEA press comes at a time when US immigration officials have denied entry to a number of students, who had been admitted to two California universities that have been 'blacklisted'.

The US however has said its decision to deny entry to even those with valid visas had nothing to do with the 'blacklisting' of the two universities. It said some individuals had been denied entry as they provided 'inconsistent information' to immigration officials.

In continuation of December 23 advisory in connection with denial of entry by the US to Indian students having valid student visas to pursue studies in educational institutions – Silicon Valley University at San Jose and Northwestern Polytechnic University, Fremont, the ministry noted that there have been more cases of deportation of Indians.

Subsequently, there have been further cases of denial of entry to Indian students holding valid visas to pursue studies in other US educational institutions, it said, adding some Indian nationals travelling on business/tourism/work visas have also been deported.

Read More: http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Honour-your-own-visas-says-India-as-US-clarifies-on-deportation-of-Indians/articleshow/50384593.cms?utm_source=TOInewHP_TILwidget&utm_medium=ABtest&utm_campaign=TOInewHP

Date Accessed: 04.01.2016

The Sikkim Anniversary

(Ivan Lidarev, *The Diplomat*, December 31, 2015)

As 2015 draws to a close, it is worth remembering that it marks a forgotten but important anniversary in the history of India and Sino-Indian relations. Forty years ago, in 1975, the princely state of Sikkim became part of India, following a long political game that saw Beijing try to lure the *Chogyal*, Sikkim's king, away from New Delhi's tight embrace. While India won out in 1975, the Sikkim issue has continued to trouble China-India relations to this day. China has not unequivocally accepted Sikkim as part of India, the Sikkim border between the two Himalayan giants remains a source of tensions, and both sides have interests in Sikkim which are often at odds.

Sikkim continues to generate tensions in Sino-Indian relations. At the same time, though, Sikkim offers hope for improved relations between the two trans-Himalayan neighbors. Since 2006 the two sides have opened the Nathu La Pass for trade, which has grown in the last decade in spite of limitations imposed by Indian security concerns and fears of Chinese economic domination of India's northeast. In a further positive sign, 2015 saw the opening of a route through Sikkim's Nathu La Pass for Indian pilgrims who want to visit Tibet's Mount Kailash and Lake Manosawar, both sacred to Hindus and Buddhists. Sikkim also hosts one of five border meeting points at which officers from the two sides can discuss and resolve border incidents. There has even been talk of developing Sikkim as a major transportation and economic corridor between China and India as part of China's "One Belt, One Road" initiative and of the Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar (BCIM) economic corridor. While none of these steps removes the mutual suspicion between China and India in Sikkim, they soften it.

Read More: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/12/the-sikkim-anniversary/>

Date Accessed: 04.01.2016

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

India Seeks to Lead Developing Nations at WTO

(*The Hindu*, January 4, 2016)

Starting with a proposed visit by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to Africa in February, India plans to play a leadership role at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations to boost the trade prospects of the developing and poor nations. To forge strong alliances on the "development agenda" of the WTO's ongoing Doha Round of talks, the government will, in the coming months,

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also hold a series of “strategy workshops” of stakeholders, inter-ministerial and Centre-state discussions in addition to summits with African countries and other developing country groups.

Read more: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/india-seeks-to-lead-developing-nations-at-wto/article8061762.ece?w=alauto>

Date accessed: 04.01.16

SOUTH ASIA

Porous Indo-Bangladesh Border to be Sealed by 2016

(Daily News & Analysis, January 4, 2016)

Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said the porous Indo-Bangladesh border in Assam would be sealed by the year (2016).

The Home Minister visited the Karimganj sector of the India-Bangladesh border in Assam, and expressed satisfaction with the ongoing border fencing work there.

Talking to media persons, the Home Minister said the border issue with Bangladesh would be solved soon.

Read more: <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-porous-indo-banladesh-border-to-be-sealed-by-2016-says-rajnath-singh-2162030>

Date accessed: 04.01.16

MIDDLE-EAST

Saudi Arabia Has Little to Worry About – No State has the Moral Authority or Will to Attack this Butchery

(Robert Fisk, The Independent, January 4, 2016)

There is, however, one little step that those who protest and roar and rage over the latest Saudi butchery might contemplate, if they can calm down enough to concentrate on the small print. The UN General Assembly, which elects those members who occupy the Council’s 47 seats, is empowered – with a two-thirds majority – to suspend the rights and privileges of any Council member which has persistently committed gross and systematic violations of human rights while a member of the Council.

But here’s the snag. Quite apart from the fawning Western leaders who would object to such a slur being uttered against Saudi Arabia – David Cameron, obviously, along with his counterparts in France, Germany, Italy, indeed the whole EU and the US (of course) and any recipient of Saudi largesse – we’d have to witness the absurd vote of Iran against Saudi Arabia. Iran, you see, has hanged an estimated 570 prisoners – 10 of them women – in the first half of 2015 alone.

In other words, he who casts the first stone – this would be literal if the Taliban were still in power in Afghanistan (though they may yet return) – had better look at his own track record. And quite apart from the US (28 executions in 2015, not counting drone attacks, “targeted killings” and other extrajudicial murders), we have to remember that on the UN Council we can find such vigorous defenders of human rights as China and Russia.

Read More: <http://www.independent.co.uk/voices/comment/saudi-arabia-has-nothing-to-worry-about-no-state-has-the-moral-authority-to-attack-this-butchery-a6795006.html>

Date Accessed: 04.01.2016

Opinions/ Books

OPINIONS

‘Censorship in India is Based on the Paternalistic Idea that Citizens are Not Mature’

(Siddharth Bhatia, *The Wire*, January 2, 2016)

An interview with William Mazzarella, Professor of Anthropology and of Social Science, University of California Berkeley, reveals what he thinks about mass publicity in India. Mazzarella talks about the historic context of censorship in India, and how it links up with efforts by the state to censor cinema in recent years.

Read More: <http://thewire.in/2016/01/02/censorship-in-india-is-based-on-the-paternalistic-idea-that-citizens-are-not-mature-18461/>
Accessed on: 05. 01. 2016

As Government Appoints Benegal Committee, an Old Report Lies Ignored

(Sangeeta Barooah Pisharoty, *The Wire*, January 4, 2016)

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting’s decision to form a three-member expert committee under the stewardship of Shyam Benegal to revamp the Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC) has been welcomed by a section of the industry but has left many others quite mystified. Given the somewhat strange decisions being taken by the present Board, the news of a committee is clearly an indication that the government is far from satisfied by the current chairman, Pahlaj Nihalani. The film industry has been aghast at Nihalani’s overreach, his style of functioning his growing list of don’ts for film makers. But here’s the catch-there is already a report, written by another expert committee formed two years ago to revamp the same Board, which is gathering dust with the ministry. Government websites feature a proposed Cinematograph Bill and the 19-page report of the committee that had, among its members, former CBFC chairperson Sharmila Tagore and Leela Samson, who resigned as chairperson in March 2015.

Read More: <http://thewire.in/2016/01/04/as-government-appoints-benegal-committee-an-old-report-lies-ignored-18532/>
Accessed on 05.01.2016

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