

## Editorial

Dear Reader,

*Our First Essay this week focuses on the importance of the Bicameral Structure of the Indian Parliament. While the issue has been debated extensively from the time of the Constituent Assembly, the past few months have seen a very shrill discourse emerging around the role of the Rajya Sabha – most vociferously brought out in the Finance Minister’s recent statement that there is “a serious question in a parliamentary democracy where in Bill after Bill, the wisdom of a directly elected House is questioned by the indirectly elected House”. The broader concept and relevance of a second chamber is being vilified due to the majority party’s rush to steamroller its way and control the Legislative arm of the State. The attempt is to push their agenda through by framing the discussion in terms of ‘loss of time’ and questioning an ‘indirectly elected House’. Both these are specious arguments that were settled by members of the Constituent Assembly. Some of the most memorable debates on the issue include N Gopalaswami Ayyangar’s statement on the role of the Rajya Sabha when he said “all we expect the Second Chamber to do is perhaps hold dignified debates on important issues and to delay legislation which might be the outcome of passions of the moment”; and on the issue of the Rajya Sabha being an “indirectly elected” House, and the sub-text that it is in some way ‘inferior’ to the Lok Sabha, PM Nehru clarified in one of the Parliamentary debates in 1953 “neither House by itself constitutes Parliament. It is the two Houses together that are the Parliament of India”. It’s time we questioned this attempt by a few politicians to reduce the Rajya Sabha to an ‘inconvenience’ else we could see John Stuart Mill’s warning on the “tyranny of the majority” coming true in India!*

*From an issue that was virtually settled about 60 years ago the second Essay this week takes you to a crucial issue that has been a few million years in the making i.e. Climate Change. India is today at a critical crossroad in that its growing population and ambition to be one of the leading economies of the world require us to evaluate the energy demand and supply to GDP growth equation from various perspectives including that of sustainability, impact on indigenous people and release of greenhouse gases. While the current dispensation sees India’s global economic ambitions as the way forward to help reduce poverty rate to 15 percent, and provide full employment etc., it is clear that India cannot continue with a carbon-intense growth strategy. The issue gets compounded by the fact that India is now the fourth largest producer and the second biggest consumer of coal worldwide and the ‘GDP-growth at any cost’ narrative requires that large coal deposits, which lie under our forests, will need to be tapped and will result in deforestation and massive displacement of tribal people if we carry on down this path. The fact that New Delhi has already become the most polluted city in the world is a wake-up call for us to realize that emissions, clean energy, deforestation and climate change are no longer esoteric issues that should be discussed only in distant, and rarefied UN meeting rooms – instead it’s time each of us understood the need for green energy and built support for taking tough, bipartisan decisions on all aspects of our energy policy, especially as the deadline for the Paris meeting in December approaches.*

*Do also have a look at some headlines in this issue of Policy Watch that draw your attention to developments that received minimal attention by the national press, but will impact India’s policy focus over the next few years – one of them being the AUSINDEX, the first bilateral maritime exercise between the Royal Australian Navy and Indian Navy. While the joint exercise is officially being explained away as a sign of growing defense ties between Canberra and New Delhi, some experts are seeing it as a response to rising concerns about China in the Indian Ocean. If, as expected by some commentators, Japan too joins the joint exercise called ‘Malabar’, scheduled later this year, then it will send out a message to China that may cause some concern in Beijing. It’ll be interesting to see how China responds to these developments especially given its “string of pearls” strategy in the Indian Ocean.*

*We hope you enjoy reading this issue of Policy Watch and look forward to your feedback.*

Ms. Barkha Deva  
Associate Director

## In This Issue

### **LEAD ESSAYS:**

- Contempt for the Rajya Sabha: An Attack on Bicameralism
- Analysing India's Energy Policy

### **HEADLINE OF THE WEEK:**

- RBI Governor Warns on Banking Reforms
- India's Top Cities have \$179.8 bn GDP at risk, says Lloyd's City Risk Index

### **SECTION 1: ECONOMY**

- CBDT Issues MAT Circular, Asks Officials not to Pursue Pending Cases
- Government Adopts New Model For Auction of 69 Oil, Gas Fields
- FII Outflows the Most Since January 2008

### **SECTION 2: GOVERNANCE AND DEVELOPMENT**

- **Politics and Governance:** Indhradhanush Framework; Another Policy Imbroglio; Is IPSLCE the Answer to IPS Shortage?
- **Health:** Abysmal State of Infant Health Care in Tribal Region of Odisha
- **Law and Justice:** Law Commission Recommends Abolition of Death Penalty, Except in Terrorism Cases and Waging War; Inform Undertrials When They Will Be Released: CIC
- **Defence:** Australia, India to Hold First Ever Naval Exercise Amid China Concerns

### **SECTION 3: SOCIETY**

- **Casteism:** The Patel Directory, Revisited
- **Social Conflict and Violence:** Old Insecurities and New Fears in Manipur Violence That Killed Eight; Justice Continues to Elude Kandhamal

### **SECTION 4: INDIA AND WORLD**

- **India in the World:** Srilanka's New Foreign Policy Provides Opportunities for India
- **International Affairs:** China, Japan and Europe are Flashing Economic Warning Signs
- **East and South-East Asia:** The New Law Making it Harder in Burma to Switch Religions

### **SECTION 5: OPINIONS/ BOOKS**

- **Opinions:** We in Alaska See that Climate Change is Real. The Time to Act is Now

## Lead Essay -1

### Contempt for the Rajya Sabha: An Attack on Bicameralism

“The makers of our Constitution envisaged the role of the Rajya Sabha along three axes: as a legislative chamber of elders discussing, revising or delaying legislation as per need; as an institution where interests of the states of the Indian Union could be projected and safeguarded and; as a deliberative chamber where greater and diverse experience is brought to bear on questions of significance. The essence of democracy is participatory governance. Experience the world over has shown that this ensures responsiveness and transparency.”

- Shri Mohammad Hamid Ansari

#### Government Push to Undermine the Rajya Sabha

The relevance of the Rajya Sabha is increasingly being called into question by the present government. In an interview in January this year, BJP President Amit Shah stated, “In a democratic republic, the House of the People should have supremacy. Every law for development of the country – and its people endorsed the House of People – gets stuck in the Upper House. This is not good for the country and it’s not a healthy tradition. The party that has majority in the Lok Sabha should have the say in issues related to development.”<sup>1</sup>

On the recent stalling of the GST Bill in the Rajya Sabha, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, Leader of the House, recently stated, “Till what extent can the indirectly-elected House hold reform proposals passed by the directly elected house which represents the will of the people? The time has come to debate on this crucial question, to find out a conventional answer to this problem. I think it's about time that we set up some good conventions in order to decide as the British did, as to how do you get legislative sanction when it is required for a reform. My own answer to this has been that it is the strength of public opinion, safeguards like joint-sessions and Money Bills, which provide for legislation part of the Answer.” He feels that “politics is increasingly getting polarised between India which wants to grow and a minuscule section of the country confined to small strength in Parliament which actually wants to obstruct. When faced with this challenge, I have been trying to read and understand how other countries in the world face this challenging situation... You have the House of Commons which have the mandate from people and you have the Upper House ... and it remains a House which is nominated,” he said. “I can try and understand the checks and balances of an indirectly-elected House. An indirectly elected House can confer its wisdom once or twice. But if we see the characters of India's politics, where the Upper House as a council of states.... and the doctrine was ordinarily you should not obstruct the decision of directly-elected House. Even if you did (obstruct), on a second or third reading you must accept the decision of the directly-elected house.”

“There is a manifesto doctrine. The Lower House is elected on the basis of manifesto and once there is a popular sanction behind the manifesto, on the second and third reading, the Upper House must accept it ... And therefore time has come for us to find out the Constitutional or as a matter of precedent a conventional answer to this problem...” He continued, “One answer lies in a question, that if this stalemate or traffic-jam remains, a lot of ordinary legislations will then have to be sent as Money Bills because society which are alive will have to find an answer as to how to grow. You can't have individual ambitions trying to obstruct a popular mandate.”<sup>2</sup>

#### The Constituent Assembly Debates and Birth of the Rajya Sabha

Bicameralism is the bedrock of India’s parliamentary democracy. The need for a Second Chamber of Parliament was hotly debated in the Constituent Assembly, with widely divergent views aired by its members about its necessity. Professor Shibban Lal Saksena, for instance, pointed out that an Upper House “has always acted as a sort of hindrance to quick progress.” Mr. Naziruddin Ahmad provided a counterview, “A popular House is known for its vitality and vigour and that House will have the exclusive power in regard to money. But a Second Chamber introduces an element of sobriety and second thought.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Article (2015), ‘RS Leader Arun Jaitley: Can unelected Rajya Sabha question elected Lok Sabha?’, The Indian Express, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2015. Available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/rs-leader-arun-jaitley-can-unelected-rajya-sabha-question-elected-lok-sabha/>

<sup>2</sup>Article (2015), ‘Arun Jaitley seeks debate on Rajya Sabha role on stalling reforms’, DNA, 19<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. Available at <http://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-arun-jaitley-seeks-debate-on-rajya-sabha-role-on-stalling-reforms-2115957>

<sup>3</sup>Constituent Assembly Debates (1947), ‘Constituent Assembly Debates (Proceedings) – Volume IV’, 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1947. Available at <http://164.100.47.132/LssNew/cadebatefiles/C28071947.html>

## Lead Essay -1

Sir N. Gopalaswami Ayyangar argued, “Sir, I do not think any elaborate justification is necessary for this clause which states that there will be two chambers in the Federal Legislature. The need for a Second Chamber has been felt practically all over the world wherever there are federations of any importance. After all, the question for us, to consider is whether it performs any useful function. The most that we expect the Second Chamber to do is perhaps to hold dignified debates on important issues and to delay legislations which might be the outcome of passions of the moment until the passions have subsided and calm consideration could be bestowed on the measures which will be before the Legislature; and we shall take care to provide in the Constitution that whenever on any important matter, particularly matters relating to finance, there is conflict between the House of the People and the Council of States, it is the view of the House of the People that shall prevail. Therefore, what we really achieve by the existence of this Second Chamber is only an instrument by which we delay action which might be hastily conceived, and we also give an opportunity, perhaps, to seasoned people who may not be in the thickest of the political fray, but who might be willing to participate in the debate with an amount of learning and importance which we do not ordinarily associate with a House of the People. That is all that is proposed in regard to this Second Chamber. I think, on the whole, the balance of consideration is in favour of having such a chamber and taking care to see that it does not prove a clog either to legislation or administration.”<sup>4</sup>

The Constituent Assembly debates illustrate the reasoning behind the country’s founding fathers decision to establish a bicameral legislative system in India, despite vehement arguments to the contrary. In a country as large and diverse as India, the necessity of a body that keeps a check on political excess, while also providing a voice for minorities and weaker sections of society, is undeniable.

### Composition and Structure

The strength of the Rajya Sabha has been fixed at a maximum of 250 members – 238 members from the States and Union territories and 12 members having special knowledge or practical experience in literature, science, art and social service to be nominated by the President. The representatives of the States are elected by the elected members of State Assemblies in accordance with the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. The representatives of the Union territories in Rajya Sabha are chosen in accordance with law enacted by Parliament.

The Rajya Sabha is a permanent body, not subject to dissolution. The term of a member of the Rajya Sabha is six years, with one-third of the members of the House retiring every year. As a perpetual house, the Rajya Sabha is a continuous institution in the parliamentary framework.<sup>5</sup>

It is important to point out that the common reference to the Rajya Sabha and the Lok Sabha as Upper House and Lower House respectively, is erroneous. As Jawaharlal Nehru put it, “To call either of these houses an Upper House or a Lower House is not correct. Each House has full authority to regulate its own procedure within the limits of the Constitution. Neither House, by itself, constitutes Parliament. It is the two Houses together that are the Parliament of India... There can be no constitutional differences between the two Houses because the final authority is the Constitution itself. The Constitution treats the two Houses equally except in financial matters which are to be the sole purview of the House of the People.”<sup>6</sup>

### Blatant Hypocrisy and an Attack on Healthy Debate

Speaking on the recent Parliamentary deadlock, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Venkaiah Naidu in August this year declared, "If you want democracy to succeed and if you want people's aspirations to be highlighted then the only way is you raise them in Parliament. And if you want to criticise the government, you can criticise as you have been doing it also."<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup>Constituent Assembly Debates (1947), ‘Constituent Assembly Debates (Proceedings) – Volume IV’, 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1947. Available at <http://164.100.47.132/LssNew/cadebatefiles/C28071947.html>

<sup>5</sup>Publication (2009), ‘Second Chamber in Indian Parliament: Role and Status of Rajya Sabha’, LARRDIS, Rajya Sabha Secretariat, August 2009. Available at [http://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/publication\\_electronic/2nd\\_cham\\_ip\\_rol\\_sta\\_2009.pdf](http://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/publication_electronic/2nd_cham_ip_rol_sta_2009.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Publication – ‘The Two Houses: Powers and Relationship’, Available at [http://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/two\\_house\\_parliament.pdf](http://rajyasabha.nic.in/rsnew/two_house_parliament.pdf)

<sup>7</sup>Article (2015), ‘Venkaiah slams opposition on Parliament deadlock, calls for healthy debate’, The Times of India, 2<sup>nd</sup> August, 2015. Available at <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Venkaiah-slams-opposition-on-Parliament-deadlock-calls-for-healthy-debate/articleshow/48318266.cms>

## Lead Essay -1

When the BJP was in the Opposition, Mr. Jaitley, then Leader of Opposition in the Rajya Sabha, claimed in 2011 that “Parliament’s job is to conduct discussions. But many a time, Parliament is used to ignore issues and in such situations, obstruction of Parliament is in the favour of democracy. Therefore parliamentary obstruction is not undemocratic<sup>8</sup>”. In 2012 he stated that “Parliamentary obstructionism should be avoided. It is a weapon to be used in the rarest of the rare cases. Parliamentary accountability is as important as parliamentary debate. Both must coexist. If parliamentary accountability is subverted and a debate is intended to be used merely to put a lid on parliamentary accountability, it is then a legitimate tactic for the Opposition to expose the government through parliamentary instruments available at its command.”<sup>9</sup> As recently as February 2014, at the end of the final session of Parliament under UPA-II, Jaitley wrote a glowing post on his Facebook page about the achievements of the Rajya Sabha when he was Leader of the Opposition, highlighting the importance of quality debate by the House<sup>10</sup>. It is unfortunate that these sentiments seem to have been discarded by the present government as soon as it ceased to be in the opposition.

Mr. Jaitley has justifiably drawn a distinction between debate and obstructionism. However, he has widened the scope of obstructionism to include all legitimate review and debate by the Rajya Sabha – rhetoric that is being used to justify circumventing it in violation of the spirit of the Constitution. By refusing to pass the GST Bill and others until they are subjected to thorough review and debate, the Rajya Sabha is carrying forward the vision of the framers of the Constitution. To use this as a basis to undermine the importance of a House of Parliament is unjustified, especially in light of the fact that until a year ago, Mr. Jaitley himself stridently justified obstruction as a vital democratic tool.

Admittedly, the Rajya Sabha is not always exempt from being used to further a Party mandate instead of engaging in unbiased debate. However, this is no ground to question the very institution and attempt to sideline it completely. More often than not, as pointed out by Mr. Jaitley himself, the true intent of the Rajya Sabha triumphs, and legislation, after being rejected and sent back to the Lok Sabha, is amended and successfully implemented.

### Importance of the Rajya Sabha Today

For the first time since the Constitution came into force, the government is openly rejecting the bicameral Parliamentary structure laid down by the Constitution and attempting to circumvent Parliamentary procedure. This is a dangerous trend that needs to be contained before it is subject to far greater abuse.

Governance involves difficult negotiations and is not simply an exercise of brute power. In his book *‘Presidential Power’*, Richard Neustadt points out that possibly the most critical aspect of the power of the US President is the power to persuade. Just as the US President cannot simply command and receive, the political grouping that enjoys a majority in the directly elected Lok Sabha also cannot simply command and receive. It has to negotiate and use its power to persuade if it wants to govern effectively.<sup>11</sup> However, when a very vocal Opposition did not allow this session of Parliament to function until its demands were met, the government employed the very combative approach that it has decried by refusing to negotiate and find common ground in order to move forward, instead proceeding to suspend protesting Members of Parliament.

In what turned out to be a foreshadowing of the present state of events, CPI(M) leader Sitaram Yechury, attacking the government for not following procedure to seek an extension of time for a Rajya Sabha committee on the Insurance Amendment Bill in November 2014, warned that “This attitude of trying to bulldoze Parliament and taking the procedures for granted is very disturbing. You (BJP) have to work for five years. If you run the House virtually by threats and blackmail, violating laid down

<sup>8</sup>Manoj C G (2015), ‘View from the Earlier Side: When Jaitley saw ‘benefits to the country’ in obstructing Parliament’, The Indian Express, 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. Available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/view-from-the-earlier-side-when-jaitley-saw-benefits-to-the-country-in-obstructing-parliament/>

<sup>9</sup>Manoj C G (2015), ‘View from the Earlier Side: When Jaitley saw ‘benefits to the country’ in obstructing Parliament’, The Indian Express, 27<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. Available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/india/india-others/view-from-the-earlier-side-when-jaitley-saw-benefits-to-the-country-in-obstructing-parliament/>

<sup>10</sup>Arun Jaitley (2014), ‘Rajya Sabha During UPA-2’, Facebook, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 2014. Available at [https://www.facebook.com/ArunJaitley/posts/217878125067410?stream\\_ref=5](https://www.facebook.com/ArunJaitley/posts/217878125067410?stream_ref=5)

<sup>11</sup>Jagdeep S. Chhokar (2015), ‘Rajya Sabha Versus Lok Sabha: FM Arun Jaitley’s Remarks Questioning The Role Of Rajya Sabha Are Misplaced’, News Laundry, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 2015. Available at <http://www.newslaundry.com/2015/05/22/rajya-sabha-versus-lok-sabha-fm-arun-jaitleys-remarks-questioning-the-role-of-rajya-sabha-are-misplaced/>

## Lead Essay -1

procedures ... this high-handedness ... gives a taste of what is going to come in the future. This is not a good sign. This is only the beginning of this government. Only six months have passed"<sup>12</sup>

Benjamin Franklin once said that *"democracy is two wolves and a lamb voting on what to have for lunch."* In such a political atmosphere, the need arises for a body that acts as some sort of check on wonton abuse of power by a majority party.

The argument put forth that since the Rajya Sabha is not directly elected it is therefore not representative of the people of India is unfounded. Article 75(3) of the Constitution provides that "the Council of Ministers shall be collectively responsible to the House of People." It consists of representatives of each state, along with other eminent and respected personalities from different fields, making the Rajya Sabha an exceptionally democratic forum for the discussion of issues of importance to the nation, free from parochial considerations. As Gopal Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi puts it, "The indirect method of electing its members would have been seen then as an insurance against majoritarianism, a bulwark against the game of numbers."<sup>13</sup> A country is made of two constituents – people and territory. The Lok Sabha, or the House of the People, stands for the sovereignty of the people, while the Rajya Sabha, or the Council of States, to which the state assemblies send their representatives, stands for the sanctity of the nation's territorial spread.<sup>14</sup>

Due to it being an indirectly appointed House, the Rajya Sabha is relatively free from the compulsions of party politics. One must remember that it plays a vital role in contributing to public discourse. This allows for reasoned deliberation unencumbered by political compulsions that tend to motivate more hasty legislative decisions.

The power of the Rajya Sabha is inversely related to how much of its strength is made up by the ruling party. If the ruling party enjoys an absolute majority, the Rajya Sabha tends to enjoy less power, as the government is confident of getting legislative proposals easily passed. However, when the ruling party is part of a coalition that may or may not have a majority, the Rajya Sabha enjoys greater power. At present, the NDA enjoys an outstanding majority in the Lok Sabha, with five times as many seats as the Congress, its main opposition.<sup>15</sup> However, it is in the minority in the Rajya Sabha. If there were no body to counter-balance the outcome of its overwhelming majority in the Lok Sabha, the NDA would be able to pass any legislation by sheer dint of its numbers, without vigorous debate or opposition.

Prime Minister Modi's well-publicised form of "CEO-style" politics involves very little room for dialogue and opposition even within his own party.<sup>16</sup> This approach is mirrored on a national scale in the spate of swift crackdowns on any sort of dissent, opposition or obstruction since he came to power, be it Teesta Setalvad<sup>17</sup>, Sanjiv Bhatt<sup>18</sup>, Priya Pillai<sup>19</sup> or a multitude of other threats, whether small or big, real or perceived. The recent attacks on the legitimacy of the Rajya Sabha is a natural extension of this destructive agenda, since it is in the Rajya Sabha that the NDA lacks the numbers to enable it to steamroll over opposition to push legislation unhindered.

<sup>12</sup> Article (2014), 'Modi govt trying to bulldoze Parliament: Sitaram Yechury', Firstpost, 25th November, 2014. Available at <http://www.firstpost.com/politics/modi-govt-trying-bulldoze-parliament-sitaram-yechury-1821387.html>

<sup>13</sup> Gopalkrishna Gandhi (2015), 'Bicameral Vision', Outlook, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. Available at <http://www.outlookindia.com/article/bicameral-vision/294445>

<sup>14</sup> Gopalkrishna Gandhi (2015), 'Bicameral Vision', Outlook, 8<sup>th</sup> June, 2015. Available at <http://www.outlookindia.com/article/bicameral-vision/294445>

<sup>15</sup> Liz Mathew (2014), 'Narendra Modi makes election history as BJP gets majority on its own', Live Mint, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2014. Available at <http://www.livemint.com/Politics/vGyzihxgQEuYmzRmyRA1vN/Election-results-2014-Counting-begins-as-Narendra-Modi-eyes.html>

<sup>16</sup> P. Raman (2015), 'CEO-style Politics', The Indian Express, 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. Available at <http://indianexpress.com/article/opinion/columns/ceo-style-politics/>

<sup>17</sup> Kalpana Sharma (2015), 'Modi government's hounding of Teesta Setalvad is a message to all dissidents', Scroll.in, 13<sup>th</sup> July, 2015. Available at <http://scroll.in/article/740762/modi-governments-hounding-of-teesta-setalvad-is-a-message-to-all-dissidents>

<sup>18</sup> Rohit Bhan (2015), Sanjiv Bhatt, First Suspended, Now Sacked From Gujarat Police, NDTV, 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. Available at <http://www.ndtv.com/india-news/suspended-gujarat-police-officer-sanjiv-bhatt-sacked-1209006>

<sup>19</sup> Lakshmi Chaudhry (2015), 'Modi govt vs Priya Pillai: Insanity of the 'doodh mein makkhi' theory', Firstpost, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2015. Available at <http://www.firstpost.com/india/modi-govt-vs-priya-pillai-insanity-of-the-doodh-mein-makkhi-theory-2108681.html>

## Lead Essay -1

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, architect of the Constitution of India, emphasised that a parliamentary system of democracy is based on accountability. It is unfortunate that the government is attempting to subvert his vision. By its actions, the government is undermining its own much-vaunted catchphrase of “minimum government, maximum governance”. What it fails to realise is that maximum governance requires parliamentary scrutiny, which it is now making every attempt to do away with when politically inconvenient.

### Conclusion

Mr. Jaitley has warned, “If the stalemate continues, then a lot of legislation would have to be framed as money Bills”<sup>20</sup>, a blatant attempt to undermine the Rajya Sabha, since the Rajya Sabha cannot block a Money Bill that has been passed by the Lok Sabha. Classifying the bulk of proposed legislation as Money Bills just to ensure their passage through the Rajya Sabha uncontested makes a mockery of Parliamentary procedure and the Constitution of India.

As a leader who, for his Independence Day speech last year, had the bulletproof glass between him and the crowds removed so that he could “directly connect” with the people<sup>21</sup>, Prime Minister Modi will need more than sweeping rhetoric and political posturing to draw the public’s attention away from increasingly brazen attempts to disregard the Constitution when it acts as an obstacle in the attempted subversion of political accountability of the government to its citizens.

### Prepared by:

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<sup>21</sup>Zia Haq (2015), ‘Towards True Freedom’ is PM Modi’s Independence Day theme’, Hindustan Times, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 2015. Available at <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/towards-true-freedom-is-pm-modi-s-independence-day-theme/article1-1380305.aspx>

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## Lead Essay -2

### Analysing India's Energy Policy

At a time when the mobilization of institutional and political alternatives for the upcoming 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of Parties (COP 21) and the conference on Sustainable Development Goals is intensifying, the compulsion on the individual states to evolve credible policy options to combat environmental degradation is at an all-time high. The largely fractured discourse centring on the development-environment trade-off is becoming unsupportable in the context of the increasing urgency of environmental risks like human costs, climate change, food insecurity and our depleting commons.

#### Current Energy Policy:

India's current energy policy is a combination of two levels of state intervention. At the institutional level, the government has institutionalized an alternative energy resource targeting framework. Herein, the aim is to leverage alternative technologies along the lines of hydraulic fracking in the United States, by exploring alternative resource extraction techniques which would help in the clean energy campaign. A landmark policy initiative in this direction came in the form of the government's recent announcement to leverage Coal Bed Methane (CBM) – a natural gas found in coal beds – production as an alternative, cleaner source of energy to coal production, while, at the same time, reducing India's natural gas imports.<sup>22</sup>

At the level of non-state interventions, however, despite leveraging clean energy technologies, the failure to bring about tough structural changes in the economy of production and consumption has resulted in a failure to address the human dimension and costs of the energy transition.

This failure is reflected in India's basic premise of energy policy which consists of two types of policy responses to managing energy<sup>23</sup> viz. promoting energy efficiency to reduce energy demand and increasing the share of renewables in the energy mix.

To this effect, the current government has launched a number of programmes. These<sup>24</sup> are compiled below:

Major programmes for energy efficiency	Scope
National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency (NMEEE)	Aims to save about 5% of the country's annual consumption of energy
Market Transformation for Energy Efficiency	Reduce transaction costs by aggregating small projects under one roof to obtain Clean Development Mechanism funds
Perform, Achieve and Trade (PAT) Mechanism for Energy Efficiency	Trading scheme to control energy demand in industrial sector
Standards and Labelling Programme	Mandatory labelling of household appliances to address household energy demand
The Energy Efficiency Financing Platform	Funding mechanism under NMEEE

Major programmes to increase the use of renewables	Scope
Jawahar Lal Nehru Solar Mission (JNNSM)	20,000 MW of grid-connected solar power by 2022, besides providing capital subsidy and generation incentives
Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPOs)	Imposition of RPOs on power distribution companies and other bulk purchasers, including a separate solar component
Other incentives	100% FDI in renewable projects; concessional import duties; tax exemptions or

i. Tanchum 2015.  
 ii. Mehta and Sharma 2014.  
 iii. Ibid.

## Lead Essay -2

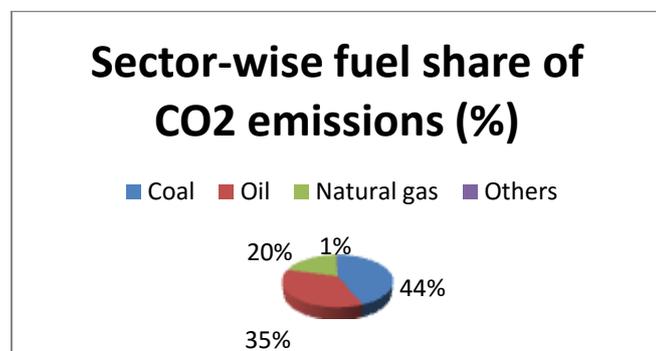
	holidays
Decentralised energy access	Provided it is more cost-effective than grid integration, there are provisions for decentralised distribution-cum-generation of renewable power sources

All these alternative energy programmes, including institutionalization of new extraction techniques like CBM, reflect the preoccupation with the twin aims of energy efficiency and transition to clean energy. At the international level, the government has matched these initiatives by consistently inking energy investment deals with most of the critical bilateral arrangements, such as during the Prime Minister's visit to Bhutan, Nepal, United States and Australia.<sup>25</sup>

Yet, if we look at the flipside of the regulatory structure, it will become evident that the current energy policy has no safeguards to address the human costs of the planned energy transition.

### The flipside: Overreliance on coal-dominated mode of production

Coal constitutes one of the most environmentally-averse, economically less-than-optimal and humanely-controversial modes of energy generation in India. The country's dangerous reliance on coal is reflected in that India's coal import dependency surged from zero in 1990 to 23% in 2012.<sup>26</sup> To what extent will the existing energy mix which is marked by an overemphasis on coal production – with more than half the country's energy mix comprising coal – help in meeting the economic and developmental needs of the country? In the context of the changing realities on the ground this has become a highly debatable question.



**Source: Key World Energy Statistics 2014 (IEA)<sup>27</sup>**

At the heart of the debate lies a fundamental paradox viz. even though India is the world's largest consumer of energy and often justifies its defensive position on rising Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in terms of meeting the developmental needs of its vast population, the country's per capita energy consumption is among the lowest in the world.<sup>28</sup> Most of the energy consumption –and coal-based emissions – in the country is concentrated in urban centres, and the rural areas have very little energy access, thereby revealing patterns of great inequality.<sup>29</sup> It also belies the Indian position on climate and energy policy, since real access remains distant while harmful emissions keep increasing.

**Table 1: Producers, net exporters and net importers of coal<sup>30</sup> (based on 2013 data):**

Producers	Mt	Net exporters	Mt2	Net importers	Mt3
China	3561	Indonesia	426	China	320
United States	904	Australia	336	Japan	196

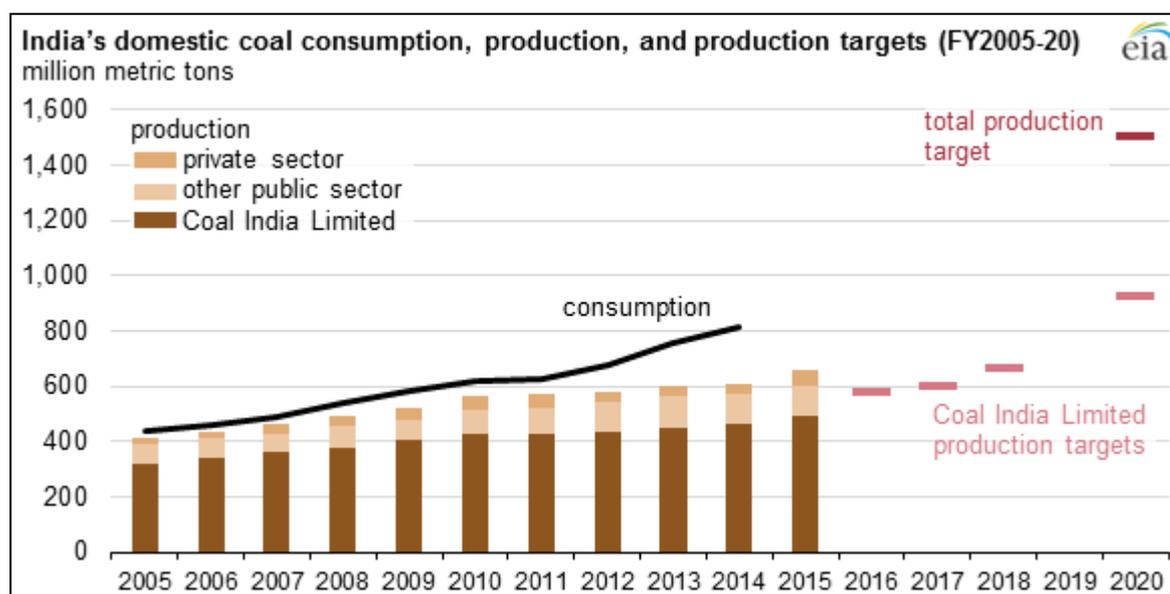
- iv. Kaushik 2014.
- v. Ibid.
- vi. International Energy Agency 2014.
- vii. Simmons and Coyle 2014.
- viii. Ibid.
- ix. Including steam coal, coking coal, lignite and recovered coal.

## Lead Essay -2

India	613	Russia	114	India	178
Indonesia	489	United States	99	Korea	127
Australia	459	Columbia	74	Chinese Tapei	68
Russia	347	South Africa	69	Germany	50
South Africa	256	Kazakhstan	32	United Kingdom	49
Germany	191	Canada	28	Turkey	28
Poland	143	Mongolia	17	Malaysia	23
Kazakhstan	120	DPR of Korea	16	Italy	20
Rest of the world	740	Others	26	Others	211

Source: Key World Energy Statistics 2014 (IEA)<sup>31</sup>

The overreliance on coal as the primary source of meeting India's energy needs to generate development is already showing negative pay-offs that are likely exacerbate in the future.



Source: Business Spectator Pvt. Ltd.<sup>32</sup>

The negative pay-offs on overdependence on coal can be seen in its impact on health, socio-economic access and on meeting climate change commitments.

In terms of the human cost of displacement, the worst sufferers of India's intention to rely on increasing coal production will be the local and indigenous communities. It will stoke socio-economic discontent, due to lack of access or inequality, and, the inhuman displacement, land grab and environmental risks caused as a result of coal extraction by mining companies.

The indigenous communities are also the worst victims of non-renewable coal mining projects, as the map above shows. While displacement constitutes a big aspect of coal mining projects in India, there has not been any systematic official study to compute the number of displaced people. Unofficial estimates, however, reveal a shocking trend, which shows how people from the marginalized regions and communities are the worst victims of mining projects in the country.

x. International Energy Agency 2014.  
 xi. Kearney 2015.

## Lead Essay -2

**Table 2: Estimated mining-induced displacement numbers in India<sup>33</sup>**

State	Years	Tribals	Dalits	Others	NA <sup>34</sup>	Total
Andhra	1980-95	NA	NA	NA	100541	100541
Assam	80-2000	NA	NA	NA	41200	41200
Goa	1980s	NA	NA	NA	4740	4740
Gujarat	1980-2000	NA	NA	NA	4128	4128
Jharkhand	1980-95	83543	63352	220076	00	402882
Orissa	1960-95	150000	45000	105000	00	300000
Kerala	1990s	NA	NA	NA	78	78
W. Bengal	60-2000	2459	99244	4373	311579	418061
Total		236002	207596	329449	462266	1571630

The future remains uncertain for local communities displaced by renewable energy projects as the government pushes for new plans to harness up to 20,000 MW of hydro projects to harness 50% of the country's potential in the next 10 years.<sup>35</sup>

Further, in terms of basic access, despite the institutionalization of a number of schemes such as Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana (RGGV KY, launched in 2005), the per capita consumption of energy is extremely low and a vast section of the poor do not have access to electricity. According to a report<sup>36</sup>, nearly 75 million households have no access to electricity and per capita consumption of electricity in rural households was only 8 units per month compared to 24 units in urban households<sup>37</sup>, and the overall per capita consumption was only 684 KWh in 2011. This is despite the fact that India is the third largest producer of electricity in the world with nearly 258 GW of generating capacity.

### Existing alternative energy policy options: Manipulating outcomes

Despite the large number of policies in place to achieve our ambitious renewable energy targets, there are both practical and fundamental problems with India's energy policy.

- *Emphasis on misplaced processes in achieving aims:* The current energy policy of India, in emphasizing the goals of energy efficiency and use of renewables exclusive of their implementation and impact on the ground level, is fundamentally flawed. The current political discourse is permeated by the emphasis on alternative energy to such an extent that nobody would even imagine contesting it. Yet, even as we emphasize the promotion of renewable sources of power generation, like hydropower and bio fuels, we fail to take cognizance of the fact that, unless they are implemented in a transformed social economy, they would inevitably result in massive human and environmental costs. Reports show that India has achieved only 44% of its 4.46 GW renewable energy target set for 2015, due to the large amount of land needed for renewable energy projects, with solar plants alone demanding about 50,000 acres of land.<sup>38</sup> Thus, if social economy is not transformed in a just manner and land acquisition continues to remain arbitrary, energy projects will become deeply exploitative.

For instance, hydropower has resulted in massive displacement in the tribal states of India. While hydropower is the leading, most efficient and non-polluting source of renewable energy world-over, its human cost is also massive. This is seen especially in the states in the North-eastern parts of India. As early as 1957, the Kaptai Dam constructed in the Chittagong Hill Tract submerged about 54,000 acres of arable land and 18,000 households,

xii. Fernandes 2007.  
 xiii. Original data does not elaborate on what is included under 'NA'.  
 xiv. Hudson Institute's South Asia Programm 2015.  
 xv. Idam Infrastructure Advisory Private Limited n.d.  
 xvi. Zee News 2014.  
 xvii. Hudson Institute's South Asia Programm 2015.

## Lead Essay -2

destroying the habitations of the Chakma and Hajong indigenous groups.<sup>39</sup> The hundreds of hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh expected to generate more than double the Mega Watts of energy relative to the country's capacity have hardly been through any Environmental Impact Assessment before being approved.<sup>40</sup> In Assam, the Pagliדיya Dam project, is expected to displace about 18,743 people.<sup>41</sup>

- *Political disjoints between institutions and their functioning:* Another potential area of concern is that the current skewed policy outcomes are often blamed on the welfare initiatives for the vast majority of the poor. This is seen in the issue of bridging the generation-transmission gap in power distribution. Power distribution companies operate at a loss due to non-remunerative tariffs arising out of subsidizing electricity access. Because of the fact that these companies are already in loss, any penalties on them to transition to clean energy will not act as an intended incentive. Therefore, it is argued that policies such as Renewable Purchase Obligations (RPOs), which can be imposed on power distribution companies, hardly succeed. This is because even if the power distribution companies do not meet their RPO requirements, the punitive measures such as imposing a higher purchase penalty on them will fail as they were already operating at a loss, to begin with.

This argument, in the area of energy efficiency, clearly shows how the burden of achieving efficiency is laid at the door of the community rather than on the reform of the institutions like the State Electricity Regulatory Commissions and the corrupt practices of several private, debt-laden power distribution companies. Thus, while nobody would contest the focus on energy efficiency, it is unfortunate that efficiency is conceived in purely cost-benefit terms without a prior reform of the political economy of power generation in India.

Thus, the state of play in India's energy policy reveals a disjunct along three lines viz. policy institutions, global commitments and poor social assessment. Not only is the policy discourse, both globally and nationally, skewed in favour of neo-liberal emphasis on efficiency and people-displacing energy sources, but even the disadvantages of a coal economy are rarely assessed in terms of their impact on the vast population of the country in terms of livelihood and access. This discourse needs to be urgently reformed if we hope to achieve a progressive energy economy.

### The way ahead

- *Strengthen public mobilization:* Given the deep disjuncts in India's energy policy, it is evident that there is a need to strengthen public mobilization and environmental movements along global lines, mirroring and adapting the initiatives such as the "War on Coal"<sup>42</sup> declared by the Sierra Club, the Guardian's divestment campaign<sup>43</sup>, etc, which pressurize the corporates and politicians alike to factor in people-sensitive policies. They mobilize the power of universities, independent youth, non-state actors and transnational cultural and media networks to build coalitions of support for naming and shaming investments that are channelized in fossil fuel industries.
- *Cease politicization of targets:* One of the defining features of the current government's energy policy is the overemphasis on targets rhetoric which may or may not measure up to substantive changes. For instance, in terms of solar energy targets, the government has stipulated to go 'far beyond' the previous government's target of 20,000 MW of solar energy capacity by 2022.<sup>44</sup> At the same time, whether this translates into action will remain questionable. The budget allocation for alternative energy this year was only 25% compared to the previous government's allocation, and is incommensurate with the government's rhetoric on scaling up renewable energy.<sup>45</sup>
- *Bring changes in the consumer economy:* Besides the obvious need to revamp the production economy in green energy by dealing with issues pertaining to crucial sectors like power, there is also a need to revamp the consumer

xviii. Chowdhury and Kipgen 2013.

xix. Ibid.

xx. Ibid.

xxi. Wolfgang 2015.

xxii. The Guardian 2015.

xxiii. Kaushik 2014.

xxiv. Ibid.

## Lead Essay -2

economy by discouraging the use of polluting fuels. According to reports, one in three Indians rely on polluting sources of energy like kerosene, diesel and biomass, with the resultant mortality rate due to pollution rising to 12% and the cost to society from pollution estimated at \$500 billion.

- *Account for the social cost of development:* A transition to renewable energy will undoubtedly involve a process of development that may not always cohere well with the domestic political economy. Therefore, instead of outright importing the ideas of clean energy processes and implementing them in the Indian context, it would be important to undertake prior social assessment of the local or indigenous communities that will be affected by these processes and ensure that they do not entail human exploitation in their wake.

**Prepared by:**  
Garima Sharma

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- i. Tanchum 2015.
- ii. Mehta and Sharma 2014.
- iii. Ibid.
- iv. Kaushik 2014.
- v. Ibid.
- vi. International Energy Agency 2014.
- vii. Simmons and Coyle 2014.
- viii. Ibid.

## Lead Essay -2

- ix. Including steam coal, coking coal, lignite and recovered coal.
- x. International Energy Agency 2014.
- xi. Kearney 2015.
- xii. Fernandes 2007.
- xiii. Original data does not elaborate on what is included under 'NA'.
- xiv. Hudson Institute's South Asia Programm 2015.
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- xvi. Zee News 2014.
- xvii. Hudson Institute's South Asia Programm 2015.
- xviii. Chowdhury and Kipgen 2013.
- xix. Ibid.
- xx. Ibid.
- xxi. Wolfgang 2015.
- xxii. The Guardian 2015.
- xxiii. Kaushik 2014.
- xxiv. Ibid.

## Headlines

### **RBI Governor Warns on Banking Reforms**

*(Asia Times, August 28, 2015)*

RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan mused recently that the correct approach to banking reform is contained in the Chinese metaphor: "Crossing the river by feeling the stones." The notion behind the phrase (which was a favorite of late Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping) is that when moving forward in new directions, you need to stay grounded and feel your way forward in the face of uncertainty. Rajan recently quoted the words in sending a strong message to the central government to get on with the reform process outlined in RBI's Annual Report 2014-15. His remarks were a response to a failed monsoon session of India's parliament when important bills remained in cold storage due to stiff resistance by opposition parties.

Rajan warned in the report that the slow pace of reform in the banking sector could lead to greater risk. So the urgent need, he says, is to put banking reforms on the fast track. But reforms cannot be shots in the dark subjecting the economy to great uncertainty and risk, he said in his report.

Read More: <http://atimes.com/2015/08/indias-central-bank-governor-warns-on-banking-reforms/>

Date Accessed: 31.08.2015

### **India's Top Cities have \$179.8 bn GDP at Risk, Says Lloyd's City Risk Index**

*(Business Standard, September 4, 2015)*

The Lloyd's City Risk Index 2015-2025 has demonstrated that India's top 10 cities have \$179.8 billion (Rs 11.9 lakh crore) GDP at risk. This index presents an analysis of economic output at risk (GDP at risk) in 301 major cities from 18 man-made and natural threats over a ten-year period. According to the research by Lloyd, Mumbai has the largest total GDP at risk with a \$47.38 billion (Rs 3.13 lakh crore) risk exposure. It was realized that, Mumbai has the largest GDP exposure to terrorism in the Index at almost \$8 billion (Rs 52,960 crore) and the second highest exposure to power outage with \$1.92 billion (Rs 12,710.4 crore) of GDP at risk, globally.

Read more: [http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-top-cities-have-179-8-bn-gdp-at-risk-says-lloyd-s-city-risk-index-115090300883\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-s-top-cities-have-179-8-bn-gdp-at-risk-says-lloyd-s-city-risk-index-115090300883_1.html)

Date Accessed: 4.9.2015

## Economics

**Table 1: General Inflation Rates in Indian States: July 2015 (%)**

States	Rural	Urban	General
<b>All India</b>	<b>5.00</b>	<b>3.51</b>	<b>4.16</b>
<b>Northern Region</b>			
Jammu & Kashmir	8.27	2.44	5.88
Himachal Pradesh	10.18	2.87	8.28
Punjab	7.21	5.35	6.23
Chandigarh	14.61	-1.22	0.29
Uttarakhand	4.62	3.67	3.94
Haryana	5.50	5.16	4.99
Delhi	6.68	5.02	5.89
Uttar Pradesh	3.61	3.16	3.15
<b>Western Region</b>			
Rajasthan	5.28	6.14	5.37
Gujarat	3.44	4.15	3.86
Maharashtra	6.25	3.09	4.28
Goa	8.03	6.88	6.73
Lakshadweep	12.72	5.14	8.87
Daman & Diu	20.25	8.88	15.23
Dadra Nagar & Haveli	19.08	5.25	12.95
<b>Central Region</b>			
Madhya Pradesh	4.17	4.96	4.38
Chattishgarh	9.28	2.70	6.34
<b>Southern Region</b>			
Andhra Pradesh	8.63	4.05	6.61
Karnataka	7.17	2.47	4.75
Kerala	4.67	1.09	3.17
Tamil Nadu	3.98	3.57	3.89
Puducherry	14.49	7.83	10.02
Andaman & Nicobar Island	12.87	2.87	7.74
<b>Northeastern Region</b>			
Arunachal Pradesh	5.22		
Assam	3.87	2.88	3.11
Manipur	20.85	5.71	14.99
<b>Meghalaya</b>	<b>-3.51</b>	<b>6.89</b>	<b>-2.17</b>
Mizoram	7.31	3.33	4.67
Nagaland	10.66	5.41	8.19
Tripura	6.96	4.52	5.83
Sikkim	10.24	1.22	8.71
<b>Eastern Region</b>			
Bihar	4.42	2.50	3.61
Jharkhand	5.77	2.45	4.18
West Bengal	0.09	2.69	1.08
Odisha	6.94	1.24	4.96

- Source: State-wise monthly inflation rates are estimated from year on year Consumer Price Index (CPI) data of MOSPI.
- There is one month time lag in CPI data (From the month February 2015 onwards the New Series is introduced with base 2012=100) provided by MOSPI, Government of India.
- The 2014 July data at state-level with base 2010 is here converted to new base 2012 with linking factors of MOSPI 1.22, 1.20 and 1.21 for rural, urban and combined respectively.

## Economics

### **CBDT Issues MAT Circular, Asks Officials not to Pursue Pending Cases**

*(Daily News & Analysis, September 3, 2015)*

Days after the government decided to exempt foreign funds from tax on profits earned before April 1, the CBDT today issued a circular asking its field officers to keep in abeyance pending assessments and not to recover any outstanding demand. To resolve a dispute that had shaken investor confidence, the Finance Minister said the government will not retrospectively impose Minimum Alternate Tax (MAT) on capital gains made by Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) and Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs).

Read more: <http://www.dnaindia.com/money/report-cbd-t-issues-mat-circular-asks-officials-not-to-pursue-pending-cases-2121441>

Date accessed: 03.09.15

### **Govt Adopts New Model for Auction of 69 Oil, Gas Fields**

*(Times of India, September 3, 2015)*

The government on Wednesday decided to move away from production-sharing model to revenue-sharing regime for auctioning 69 small oil and gas fields, a major reform push that would make it simpler for explorers to do business and unlock hydrocarbons treasure worth Rs 70,000 crore. As icing, the new fiscal regime will put no marketing or pricing restriction on operators — an issue that had inhibited investors and dogged contracts for previously auctioned fields under production.

Read more: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/Govt-adopts-new-model-for-auction-of-69-oil-gas-fields/articleshow/48781392.cms>

Date accessed: 03.09.15

### **FII Outflows the Most Since Jan 2008**

*(Samie Modak, Business Standard, September 1, 2015)*

Foreign Institutional Investors (FIIs) pulled out about Rs 16,700 crore (\$2.5 billion) from Indian equities in August, 2015, sending the BSE Sensex down by 6.5 per cent, the highest since November 2011. The selling in August was largely due to fear of a China-led global slowdown, said analysts.

In January 2008, foreign investors had pulled out Rs 17,227 crore (\$4.4 billion), the highest ever, which had led to the Sensex falling 13 per cent, owing to the global financial meltdown triggered by a subprime crisis in the US.

Read more: [http://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/fii-outflows-the-most-since-jan-2008-115083100864\\_1.html](http://www.business-standard.com/article/markets/fii-outflows-the-most-since-jan-2008-115083100864_1.html)

Date Accessed: 3.9.2015

## Governance and Development

### *POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE*

#### **Indradhanush Framework**

*(The Swarajya Magazine, August 25, 2015)*

Earlier this month, the Ministry of Finance came up with the seven-step *Indradhanush* framework to transform the shape of the government-owned public sector banks. As the press release accompanying the announcement of the framework pointed out: “*Indradhanush* framework for transforming the public sector banks represents the most comprehensive reform effort undertaken since banking nationalisation in the year 1970. Our PSBs are now ready to compete and flourish in a fast-evolving financial services landscape.”

Read more: <https://swarajyamag.com/economy/indradhanush-framework-a-missed-opportunity-for-the-modi-government/>

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

#### **Another Policy Imbroglia**

*(The Hans India, August 26, 2015)*

The ILO’s global standard Convention 189 that came into force in 2013 regulates working conditions for millions of people employed in households and guarantees them some basic protection. India supported this convention, but has not yet ratified it. When the National Advisory Council (NAC) made the proposal to declare a national policy for domestic workers in April 2009, the main object was to extend the benefit of labour laws to cover domestic workers also. It also suggested bringing them within the ambit of social security under the Unorganized Sector Social Security Act 2008 for maternity benefit, safe and healthy place to stay, safe working place etc.

Read more: <http://www.thehansindia.com/posts/index/2015-08-26/Another-policy-imbroglio-172624>

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

#### **IS IPSLCE the Answer to IPS Shortage?**

*(Bureaucracy Today, August 2015)*

A recent report published by the Union Home Ministry signifies an acute shortage of IPS officers which is causing a serious setback to the law and order situation in India. While the reasons attributed for the dearth are several, the underlying causes are still unclear. However, the Home Ministry has sought an alternative mode of recruiting IPS officer through an Indian Police Service Limited Competitive Examination which is also conducted by the Union Public Service Commission. While the examination scheme is still under consideration, its proposal includes the recruitment of 70 officers per year for a period of eight years from among officers of the State Police Services, the paramilitary forces and the Armed Forces.

Read more: [http://www.bureaucracytoday.com/Mustread\\_all.aspx?Archive\\_id=8&id=10459](http://www.bureaucracytoday.com/Mustread_all.aspx?Archive_id=8&id=10459)

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

### *HEALTH*

#### **Abysmal State of Infant Health Care in Tribal Region of Odisha**

*(Free Press Journal, September 03, 2015)*

Odisha health system in tribal region is helpless against continuous high rate of infant deaths. According to a report of FPJ, “as many as 154 infants died in different hospitals in Kandhamal between April and July, reflecting the abysmal state of infant and child health care in tribal dominant district.”

Read more: <http://www.freepressjournal.in/154-infants-die-in-4-months-in-kandhamal-hospitals/>

Date Accessed: 04.09.2015

## Governance and Development

### *LAW AND JUSTICE*

#### **Law Commission Recommends Abolition of Death Penalty, Except in Terrorism Cases and Waging War**

(Betwa Sharma, *The Huffington Post*, August 31, 2015)

The Law Commission of India recommended the abolition of the death penalty except in terrorism related offences and waging war. In its 218-page report to the central government, the Law Commission said, "In retaining and practicing the death penalty, India forms part of a small and ever dwindling group of nations."

"Although there is no valid penological justification for treating terrorism differently from other crimes, concern is often raised that abolition of death penalty for terrorism related offences and waging war, will affect national security. However, given the concerns raised by the law makers, the commission does not see any reason to wait any longer to take the first step towards abolition of the death penalty for all offences other than terrorism related offences," the report said. "The Commission accordingly recommends that the death penalty be abolished for all crimes other than terrorism related offences and waging war," it said.

Read More: [http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2015/08/31/law-commission-recommends\\_n\\_8064498.html?utm\\_hp\\_ref=india](http://www.huffingtonpost.in/2015/08/31/law-commission-recommends_n_8064498.html?utm_hp_ref=india)

Date Accessed: 31.08.2015

#### **Inform Undertrials when They Will be Released: CIC**

(*Free Press Journal*, September 01, 2015)

Central Information Commission directed the Home Ministry to compile a list of under trial prisoners, who have completed half of the maximum period of imprisonment prescribed for their alleged crime and inform them about their date of release.

Read more: <http://www.freepressjournal.in/inform-undertrials-when-they-will-be-released-cic/>

Date Accessed: 04.09.2015

### *DEFENCE*

#### **Australia, India to Hold First Ever Naval Exercise amid China Concerns**

(Prashanth Parameswaran, *The Diplomat*, September 01, 2015)

Next month, the Indian Navy and Royal Australian Navy will hold their first-ever joint maritime exercise. The exercise, called AUSINDEX, will be held off India's Visakhapatnam Port in the Bay of Bengal in mid-September. The exercise will have both sea and shore phases and include table-top exercises, scenario planning, and at sea, surface and anti-submarine warfare.

Read More: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/09/australia-india-to-hold-first-ever-naval-exercise-amid-china-concerns/>

Date Accessed: 01.09.2015

## Society

### CASTEISM

#### **The Patel Directory, Revisited**

(R.K. Misra, *Outlook*)

An agitation for caste-based reservations by the powerful Patel community has roiled Gujarat, a state that used to be held up by former chief minister Narendra Modi as a model of development. His protege, present CM Anandi-ben Patel, has to contend with a quota agitation by her powerful Patel community that threatens to spin out of control. The Patidars have raised the demand for reservation in government jobs and professional courses in the Other Backward Classes (OBCs) category. Since the Patels are a powerful community, well represented politically and with strong participation in business and the professions, the 146 other communities in the OBC category, along with the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe groups, together oppose the Patels' demand, deeming them a forward group. These communities too have threatened to take to the streets.

Read More: <http://www.outlookindia.com/article/the-patel-directory-revisited/295200>

Date Accessed: 31.08.2015

### SOCIAL CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

#### **Old Insecurities and New Fears in Manipur Violence that Killed Eight**

(Esha Roy, *The Indian Express*, September 3, 2015)

The Manipur Land Revenue and Land Reforms (Seventh Amendment) Bill 2015 recently passed by the state assembly was heavily opposed by the various tribal communities in the state who came together for the first time to call a strike in all the hill districts. The strike led to extreme violence in Churachandpur district killing eight people in the area. They were protesting the bill that allows non-tribals in the state including the dominant Meithei community to acquire land currently inhabited by tribal communities in the hill districts.

Read more: <http://indianexpress.com/article/explained/old-insecurities-and-new-fears-in-manipur-violence-that-killed-eight/>

Date Accessed: 03.09.2015

#### **Justice Continues to Elude Kandhamal**

(Brinda Karat, *The Indian Express*, September 4, 2015)

After seven years since communal violence against the Christian community in Kandhamal in Odisha the people responsible for the violence continue to roam free. The leaders of the RSS led organizations involved in the violence were freed within months of their arrest and have been mobilizing the tribal Kui community against the Dalit Pana community in a repeat of what happened in 2008.

Read More: <http://www.thehindu.com/opinion/lead/justice-continues-to-elude-kandhamal/article7612329.ece?homepage=true>

Date Accessed: 04.09.2015

## India and World

### INDIA IN THE WORLD

#### Srilanka's New Foreign Policy Presents Opportunities for India

(*The Diplomat*, August 24, 2015)

Under the previous regime of Mahinda Rajapaksa, both India and the West were increasingly alienated while the Chinese had free play in the country, crystallized in terms of investment in infrastructure or financing offers. Wickremesinghe is expected to reverse this by devising a foreign policy that is more broad-based, with renewed outreach to India, the United States, Europe, and Japan. With bilateral trade at \$5.2 billion in 2013-14, Modi, during his visit to Sri Lanka earlier this year, pitched an expansion of the India-Sri Lanka free trade agreement (FTA) and came out in favor of balancing bilateral trade, which currently favors India.

Read more: <http://thediplomat.com/2015/08/sri-lankas-new-foreign-policy-presents-opportunities-for-india/>

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

### INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

#### China, Japan and Europe are Flashing Economic Warning Signs

(*The New York Times*, August 24, 2015)

Even before the recent plunge in commodity and stock markets, the world economy was weak. But recent data from China, Europe, Japan and other countries suggest that growth is slowing more sharply than many analysts had anticipated. That puts the burden on policy makers in these countries to come up with more credible ways to bolster their economies. The most worrying signs are coming from China, the world's second-biggest economy. After two decades of rapid growth, China's economy is decelerating and its leaders are failing to strengthen it by, for instance, decreasing its reliance on investment and putting greater emphasis on consumer demand

Read more: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/opinion/china-japan-and-europe-are-flashing-economic-warning-signs.html?emc=edit\\_ty\\_20150825&nl=opinion&nid=71538857&r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/08/25/opinion/china-japan-and-europe-are-flashing-economic-warning-signs.html?emc=edit_ty_20150825&nl=opinion&nid=71538857&r=0)

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

### EAST AND SOUTH EAST ASIA

#### The New Law Making it Harder in Burma to Switch Religions

(*The National Deseret News*, August 25, 2015)

"Under the religious conversion bill, individuals choosing to adopt another faith confront special bureaucratic hurdles — including requiring applicants to provide extensive and intrusive personal information, to receive 'approval,' thereby creating a system that effectively would discourage and reject conversions," the independent federal commission said in a statement. In neighboring India, anti-conversion bills have also surfaced, but so far have not progressed very far.

Read more: <http://national.deseretnews.com/article/5644/The-new-law-making-it-harder-for-people-in-Burma-to-switch-religions.html#8G2XSqQ25CXseyOm.99>

Date Accessed: 28.8.2015

## Opinions/Books

### OPINIONS

#### **We in Alaska See that Climate Change Is Real. The Time to Act is Now.**

(Othniel Art Oomittuk Jr, *The Guardian*, August 31, 2015)

How can we say no to drilling in the Arctic when we use oil every day? We use it for heating our houses, fueling our four-wheelers and cooking our meals. But saying no to oil does not mean we have to go back to old times. There is energy in the Arctic other than oil. Solar and wind power is available for everyone here. What we need is the affordable technology to develop and store these natural unlimited energy sources. There certainly is enough room for wind farms and solar farms. We can make a different choice now – just look at Hawaii’s recent commitment to become completely fossil fuel independent by 2045.

Read More: <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/31/alaska-climate-change-obama-time-act>

Date Accessed: 01.09.2015

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