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There is something odd and pathetic in the latest Indian efforts to bring back money stashed away in foreign (mostly Swiss) banks by Indian citizens. Odd, because no new development warrants the hope that the latest efforts will succeed where the earlier ones failed. Pathetic, because no such effort can succeed till the Swiss dilute, relax or do away with secrecy provisions relating to the operations of their banks. There is no indication that they propose to do any such thing.

It is because of the strict Swiss secrecy laws that no effort to obtain information about deposits by foreigners in Swiss banks has succeeded so far. The only difference between the new attempts and the earlier ones is that the Supreme Court has now set up a special investigation team on black money to probe the phenomenon and come up with solutions. Whether the SIT will succeed is a matter of conjecture right now.

However, one encouraging factor in this regard is that the Swiss authorities seem more sympathetic to the requests by foreign countries to share vital information with them. They have

assured India that Switzerland will work with India in support of the campaign against tax evaders. Some rules are likely to be changed soon so that the Indian government's steps to curb tax crimes could receive vital inputs from the Swiss. This perhaps relates to specific demands on specific accounts by New Delhi.

There were some newspaper reports earlier that the Swiss government had decided to share information with India on Indians having unaccounted money in Swiss banks. These reports however were subsequently denied. The Swiss do not propose to share any information.

The chairman of the SIT Justice M. B. Shah has candidly acknowledged that the Swiss denial is a setback to the efforts at investigating the phenomenon. The helplessness inherent in the situation has not escaped his attention. He is aware that without Swiss co-operation no effort will succeed. "As of now," he said, "even if an official SIT team is sent to Switzerland, nothing can be done without Swiss cooperation."

According to newspaper reports, accessing information on tax crimes

from Switzerland may become easier with a proposed revision in their Tax Administrative Assistance Act to do away with a requirement to inform individuals prior to sharing their details with a foreign jurisdiction for alleged tax crimes. This again perhaps relates to individual cases.

There is however no doubt that India is now keen that the campaign for unearthing unaccounted money is taken a step forward. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley has written to the Swiss authorities, the government has set up a SIT on the prodding of the Apex Court and the BJP election manifesto has accorded highest priority to bringing the black money hoarded abroad. The Reserve Bank has directed all banks to ensure that information sought by the SIT is promptly made available to it.

Although in terms of the total foreign deposits in Swiss banks, an estimated at 1.6 trillion US dollars, Indian deposits are only around two billion US dollars, an equivalent of Rs. 14000 crores. Not much in global scales but substantial enough for a country whose economy is yet to take off. If even half the amount stashed is brought back it will make a difference, even if peripheral, to India's fast-growing economy.

Time was when the extent of black money circulating domestically was so large that India was virtually in the grip of a parallel economy, with fears that the black money was even more voluminous than the white money. Things have improved now, thanks largely to the fact that India's developing economy has sought investments from a variety of investors, many of whom have undoubtedly converted black into white while "investing" in projects. However, even now, the volume of

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Between the lines

Switching over to Hindi?

Kuldip Nayar

I am convinced that the Narendra Modi government is guided, if not goaded, by the Hindi chauvinists. The Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) has several liberal leaders who realize that the pace of switch over to Hindi would have to be slow, keeping in mind unity in diversity. Apparently, they do not have much say.

Within the very first fortnight of the Modi's regime, the central government offices have received a circular that Hindi should be used on social media. This is an entrance through the backdoor. Non-Hindi speaking states spotted the fugitive move and protested against it. New Delhi readily withdrew its step and declared that the circular was meant for the Hindi-speaking states.

This belated realization does not convince anyone. I think the government was testing the waters. When it found that what it considered an innocuous step has evoked strong opposition, it changed its stance. But the circular has done the damage. The fears of non-Hindi speaking people have got rekindled. And they are afraid of what may happen tomorrow.

India has gone through large linguistic riots in the late '50s and early '60s. At that time also the Home Ministry had issued instructions to different departments to make preparations for a switchover from English to Hindi as laid down in the Constitution. Riots took place in southern states and one man immolated himself in Tamil Nadu to

convey his refusal to accept Hindi. Even the old slogan of secession got renewed.

The then Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, was unhappy but did not want to interfere. However, when he saw the fire spreading, he gave an assurance on the floor of parliament that there would be no switchover until the non-Hindi speaking people themselves said that they were ready for Hindi to be an exclusive language of Union administration. This categorical statement disappointed Hindi fanatics but the nation on the whole heaved a sigh of relief that India had retrieved from the brink.

No doubt, Modi feels at home with Hindi and his sweep in the Lok Sabha elections is primarily because of the campaign he led in Hindi, somewhat Sanskritised for northern Indians. But he should remember Nehru's promise made in 1963 that both Hindi and English would continue to be the link languages for administration throughout the country. He did not fix any deadline for the exclusive use of Hindi.

I wish this bilingualism should have continued without anyone tinkering with it. But then the Modi's men were in a hurry. They wanted to restrict the use of English to certain fields. Yet they realize that their haste can tell upon the country's unity. Non-Hindi speaking states, particularly Tamil Nadu, have accepted the constitutional provision that Hindi is the Indian Union's language. But

they want time to learn it and come up to the standards of people living in the Hindi belt like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan.

Already some candidates from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka, whose mother tongue is not Hindi, have excelled in competitive examinations. India of today is very different from what it was 50 years ago, each linguistic group asserting for its identity. The turmoil during the States' Reorganization process should be a warning. The idea of India can be jeopardized. The entire fabric can get torn if the sensitivities of the people are not allayed. What is the hurry? A few more decades' wait is too small a price to pay for preserving the nation's cohesion.

I recall how the Hindi fanatics offered quotas in jobs in cases where the use of English was stopped. This approach by ex-speaker Purshotam Das Tandon from Uttar Pradesh was ridiculed by a parliament member in Kerala. He warned him not to open the floodgates of quota lest there should be a demand for such an arrangement in every field. All other members from non-Hindi speaking areas also supported him. Finally, the proposal was dropped.

There are 22 languages recognized in the Constitution, each with its own script. True, Hindi is a link language along with English, but all the 22 languages are national. This was conceded by the parliamentary committee on language commission, although the committee gave Hindi the status of principal language and additional language status to English.

The purpose of my narration is that the status quo should continue

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Cash casts its shadow over polls

Madabhushi Sridhar

It is strange that corruption was not at all an issue in the current elections; may be because it is difficult to say who is not corrupt, including the 'voters'!

But every political party leader talked about corruption of the other party. Recent scams were highlights of all the public speeches. Besides some filthy abuses, rest of the talk was about 'the nation being looted by ...' Almost each political leader accused the other for 'selling' tickets i.e., 'B' Forms to the candidates. It was also whispered and strongly alleged in internal discussions that those who could influence 'high command' were on high demand and made lots of money in enabling alliances between two political parties and disabling them in some. From the synchronization of political wave length, Congress and TRS who were for creating Telangana should have aligned in Telangana and BJP could not have shook hands with TDP as they stood on extreme ends so far as division of Andhra Pradesh was concerned. Why it happened? What influenced? New political parties appeared on the eve of polls and stormed with abuses, why? For a matinee idol it was more a call sheet than a campaign trail.

Hundreds of crores of Rupees in cash was caught while being transported. None knows how much was transferred by hawala and other invisible means. The VVIP campaigners were busy with election tours, though most of them did not address public meeting! What were they doing? Why did they come? Whether they used their VVIP immunity cover to hide anything?

Thus from Dillee to Galle, the money monitored and the currency shocked like current of electricity. The sacred Dhanalakshmi was stuffed in bayonets, by the side of burning engine, under carpets, etc. One did not mind if some of stashed cash destroyed in fire or lifted by onlookers when left out by those who fled the scene for fear of prosecution and publicity.

The bribery percolated through top leaders, to distributors, to workers and ultimately to voters. The families and groups demanded a particular rate for voting favourably. While some stinking rich candidates were enthusiastic to distribute the cash, others who were in the middle range found it difficult to cope up with voters' demands for specific price and ran for debts. Most strikingly the educated have put their votes to auction and bargained to get better price. They shocked some MPs who really worked for people's development, helped certain sections and stood by a cause, when those who received such helps turned around to demand money. An educated voter bargained with an MP candidate in Telangana; "We are four in our family, we are interested in your party and you in particular. So we came to you. You know the prevailing rate. Rs 1000 per vote, we will adjust, though other party is ready to pay more, we do not give to them..." The price varies with the fierceness of competition, the rate offered by other candidate and the richness of the candidate.

Most revealing factor is: Education did not add any value to the voter, but increased the price like dowry rate

of post-graduate groom. Most of the educated voters preferred selling off their votes. It is proved with postal ballots. Those posted to perform election duties had applied for postal ballots and got them. Their concern for democracy is great. But the truth is different. Those teachers gazetted officers and engineers, etc have put those ballots before the 'candidates' for sale and secured highest price possible. There were officers who walked away with 40 to 60 thousand Rupees for their ten votes (both for MP and MLA). Candidate too has a justification. He says: we are sure that these votes will poll for us because they handed over the ballots to them. We only mark them and post. Secrecy of vote has gone with winds. Such 'facility' is not available for other ballots. The candidates are at risk as the educated or uneducated voter could change his mind at any moment. An MP candidate agent said "but you know, rural voter is more credible." It is open secret that secrecy of voting is no more a secret.

After the postal voters, it was group voters who demanded substantial money to vote en masse. It was pathetic that contestants could not dare to come back home even at late night for fear of women groups and self help groups demanding huge amounts of money for their bulk votes. However they could not escape. "If you also demand like this where we go, sister..." pleaded a candidate. Answer was immediate: 'Anna should women not ask money, because they are female? We surely vote you unlike male members who get influenced by liquor or false promises.' The candidate has to keep quiet and pay.

A journalist quoted the following conversation between a candidate and an educated voter:

Candidate (MP): I wrote several letters, forwarded your representations, met the minister and pleaded to sanction road, school etc. for your village, and still you want me to pay money?

Voter (MA): Sir, did we ask you to do all that? Why did you do? If at all, it was for your name and fame. Now again for five years you will be in the fame. ... You know how the system runs...

The MP candidate was upset, did not want to purchase the votes from thankless voters. But elders around him and their 'better sense' prevailed ultimately.

Voter too had a strong argument: when you are remunerated why not I? When there is no honest candidate in the field, why should you expect voter to be pure?

A senior leader of a prominent political party told me: "please do not think otherwise, let me tell you that these so-called educated voters are highly corrupt, more than anybody...the illiterate were honest and decisive".

Yet another open secret is: the people will not attend any public meeting unless their TA and DA is arranged. Rs one crore is minimum the party has to shell down for organizing a fairly 'big' meeting so that media coverage conveys a message that they still remain a force. The cars or taxis have to be sent based on the rate per seat, like Rs five to ten thousand per vehicle, which include money for food, travel and also liquor if demand is high. Days of truck carrying people have gone. We generally find the same audience in different meeting. (What's wrong?) Whether empowered or not, the voter is certainly enriched in most of the

villages. Education begets more enrichment, alas!

There are MPs who pledged everything and ran into debts worth crores to meet their rivals in battle for ballot. Rich candidates with undisclosed money were more comfortable. They were neither tense nor worried to get the rates reduced.

Less said is better about media (most of them, if not all) and its rate for paid news and paid bulletins on TV screen. Broadsheet is full of ads in camouflage of news or constituency analysis. The package deals have assumed the shape of compulsions rather than consensual contracts. At times there was no bargain at all. 'They fixed the rates and hence no bargain please...' was the curt reply to politicians from journalists. Scene has been reversed for a while as MPs were trying to lobby to influence managing editors for rebates in package deals. Rich MP candidates was taxed with Rs 25 lakhs minimum while journalists were sympathetic with some who were given a special price of 20 or 15 lakh rupees. The reciprocal benefit is regular favourable appraisal of poll situation or at least no adverse publicity. Though not a blackmail, it was a thorough exploitation of fear of losing that enriched the media organizations, whether organized or individually operated. Somewhere in AP journalists got brand new Maruthi Swift cars for their objective performance of duties.

The question is who is corrupt, or who is not? Whether Representation of People's Act, the Constitution of India, moral (model) code of conduct, the Election Commission of India or any other force under sky can prevent influence of money over the minds of people?

From Baghdad to Bolangir Labour Laws in India

Saba Sharma

From the crisis in Iraq, a story is emerging of 40 construction workers in Mosul who have gone missing, some reports claim because they were trying to escape from the city and were captured by militants in the process. Many of these workers, feared kidnapped by ISIS, refused both their employers' and the Indian government's help to evacuate, as many have not been paid up to five months' wages. Another report reveals that a group of 46 nurses from Kerala, working in a hospital in Tikrit, have refused to leave despite an offer from Delhi to help them evacuate. They need the money, as do their families back at home, so they would rather move to a safe zone in Iraq than return. Two nurses in the same hospital, who are on holiday in India, told the BBC that they would return despite the travel advisory issued by India advising citizens not to travel to Iraq. For them, failing to return means defaulting on loans taken to pay recruitment agents.

A few days before, on June 16, the NDA government announced that it was looking at liberalizing labour laws, primarily to make easier the retrenchment of workers. The UPA, and former PM Manmohan Singh in particular, also had labour law reform as an agenda, propelled by constant laments from industry saying 'obsolete' labour laws hindering growth and holding back the economy. The Vansundhara Raje government is already amending some state-level acts in Rajasthan to 'liberate the corporate sector from the shackles of stringent

requirements of the laws', as one report put it.

As the story slowly shifts from the workers to the impact of the crisis on our supply of oil from Iraq, it is an important moment to examine why so many Indians go to the middle east for work, and why they continue to stay despite the widely reported abuse and exploitation of many unskilled and semi-skilled workers in the region, including non-payment of wages. This is not the story of well-travelled businessmen and corporate employees who have the opportunity to live and work in countries like Dubai and Kuwait in conditions of their choosing, it is the less acknowledged and far more prevalent tale of domestic workers who have their passports taken away, and construction workers who would rather risk their lives than come home without nearly half a year's worth of wages.

In the India Exclusion Report, an examination of labour rights in India (written, among others, by Coen Kompier of the ILO), paints a very different situation of the regulation of working conditions in India than what is imagined and portrayed by industry and governments. To begin with, labour laws, however 'obsolete', primarily apply to those in the formal sector, and a vast majority of workers, 86 per cent (or 400 million workers), are in the informal sector, and have little protection under existing labour laws. Most of these workers, if not self-employed, work as casual labourers or on a contractual basis,

often going through middlemen who negotiate the terms of their engagement. Even in the formal sector, however, there are new employment practices that reduce the security of a formal job. Over half (51 per cent) of workers in the formal sector do not have tenured employment but are employed on a contractual basis, implying a high degree of 'informality' in their employment. Among those employed on a contractual basis, employers often artificially diminish working hours, or move workers from one location to another so that they fall outside the scope of legislation.

Among the Rajasthan government's amendments to labour laws is the provision that increases the percentage of workers needed for the formation of a union from 15 per cent to 30 per cent. Trade unions in Rajasthan have protested this move, alleging that these moves have been undertaken without their consent. At present, only one in every five workers in India have trade union membership, reasons for which are the high rate of migration, as well as the preference of employers for outstation workers, which dampens chances of collectivization. Labour authorities often refuse to register unions, without which they have no bargaining power with employers, who are not bound by the law to recognize such unions, even though it is not a prerequisite for their establishment. Because of definitional issues, informally employed domestic workers or

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home-based workers, among others, do not have the legal status of ‘employee’ to form recognized unions.

Despite the constant bad press that ‘stringent’ labour laws have received, facts reveal that not only are they implemented poorly, but that even where law and judiciary do act, it is in favour of employers, not workers. Conviction rate for violation of labour laws is under 2 per cent, as employers lobby against compliance with law terming it ‘inspector raj’. Since 2001, a series of court judgments, beginning with SAIL (Steel Authority of India Ltd and Ors. v. National Union Waterfront Workers and Ors.), did away with many entitlements of contract workers, allowing employers to have more ‘flexible’ workforces. Further court judgments ruled that workers employed for long periods did not have to be made permanent, employers were not obliged to keep employment records, the right to strike was restricted, and workers terminated illegally were not entitled to reinstatement. In essence, employers are freed from most responsibilities towards employees within the framework of the law. Since the emergence, in particular, of middlemen to handle contract labour, not only are many administrative costs driven down, but employers also do not have a direct relationship with employees, effectively creating uncertainty about who is ultimately responsible for workers’ rights.

It is not hard to imagine why working in Iraq is as good as or preferable to trying one’s luck in the labour law lottery of India. Even where provisions for workers exist

That darkness still stalks our dreams

M.G. Devasahayam

On the midnight of June 25, 1975, prime minister Indira Gandhi nearly destroyed India’s democratic framework with a piece of paper that proclaimed a state of emergency. It was carried by her private secretary to the President, who meekly signed it. The misgovernance that followed extinguished freedom, suspended fundamental rights, fettered the press, suppressed dissent. More than one lakh citizens were illegally detained. Draconian laws followed. Democratic governance collapsed.

At that time, I was the district magistrate of Chandigarh, a Union Territory governed by the Centre. The home ministry and the PMO were directly monitoring my “eminent prisoner”, Jayaprakash Narayan, India’s tallest leader after Mohandas Gandhi, and then Enemy No. 1 of the state. He’d been arrested by the district magistrate of Delhi and sent to me for safe custody. So I had a ringside view of the Emergency, right from the corridors of power in Delhi to the streets of Chandigarh. Everyone could see the Emergency drama around them, but I—a member of the elite IAS, but primarily a freedom-loving citizen—had the opportunity to witness, feel and be a part of the intense struggle of JP, the “revolutionary in chains”.

In my own humble way, I initiated certain moves for reconciliation between JP and Indira Gandhi so that the Emergency would be lifted and democracy restored at the earliest. I’d even roped in Sheikh Abdullah for the purpose through the good offices of Punjab chief minister Giani Zail

Singh. These efforts were repeatedly sabotaged by an extra-constitutional authority at Delhi’s pinnacle of power. Mysteriously, starting early November, the health of JP, who was lodged at the Postgraduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, began to deteriorate sharply. I had every reason to suspect that a conspiracy was on to incapacitate JP by damaging his kidneys and put him out of harm’s way if not eliminate him. Probably, Delhi durbar felt that JP was the only person of moral stature who could challenge the dynasty. Later events proved me right.

By divine grace, I could defeat the conspiracy by playing hardball with the Centre with a pointed poser: “What if JP dies in detention?” That sent shivers in the PMO, for just a few weeks earlier, sleuths had rehearsed a “death-in-detention” drill. Within a week, JP was released on unconditional parole. In defiance of Delhi durbar, I commandeered seats on a flight and sent JP to Jaslok Hospital in Bombay with his brother Rajeshwar Prasad and friend Minoo Masani. We were just in time for his kidneys to be saved. JP lived for four more years, albeit on dialysis twice a week. For this audacity, I did incur the wrath of the ‘dynasty’ scion and his minions. But I had the honour of JP calling me “the son I never had” and Dr Manmohan Singh complimenting me, saying, “Deva, you did not merely save JP, you saved Indian democracy.”

In the 1977 election, JP led the Janata combine and threw the

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Congress out of power. Needless to say, the conspiracy to damage JP's kidneys was never fully investigated and the Alva commission set up by Janata government was wound up under intense pressure from vested interests still owing allegiance to the Congress dynasty.

Be that as it may, a 'secret' IB report leaked on June 11 lists me among 'eminent persons' who are part of an anti-national, foreign-funded "Superior Network of pan-India NGOs", including Greenpeace and People's Union for Civil Liberties (PUCI). These NGOs are allegedly "taking down development", impacting GDP by three per cent and endangering "national economic security" by articulating people-centric issues. Is that not the sort of language used during the Emergency? The PUCI, founded by that great patriot JP, responded that the report was an attempt to intimidate and kill dissent from those who raise an often lonely voice against life-and-livelihood-destroying development programmes.

Indeed, I have been speaking up against big-ticket, forest-destroying, coast-ravaging and livelihood-killing projects such as Vedanta and Posco. Also against resource-guzzling, secretive and extremely expensive nuclear projects such as the 2,000 MW Koodankulam plant (to be expanded to 6,000 MW) and the 2,800 MW Gorakhpur plant (in Haryana).

I oppose the Koodankulam project because it has devastated the southeastern seabed and would rob lakhs of fisherfolk of a livelihood. It could also hang like a sword of Damocles over millions of project-affected people because of unsafe equipment. As recently as May 14,

six personnel were seriously injured at the Koodankulam plant because of malfunctioning valves. I oppose the Gorakhpur project because the 320 cusecs of Bhakra canal water allotted to this plant would deprive 1.4 lakh acres of farmland of water. The region is semi-arid and the cotton, wheat, pulses and oilseeds grown here depend on irrigation from the canal. Farming supports the lives of about a million directly engaged in it here. Villages here are also the habitat of blackbuck (a "near-threatened" species) and the project will cause the animals immense harm. Another reason I oppose nuclear reactors is because post-Fukushima, they raise great worries about being a threat to life itself. Nuclear energy, which generates just one per cent of the country's needs, is not the answer to India's electricity problems. It is also very expensive, if all costs—capital, construction, commissioning, operation, decommissioning and safe storage of spent-fuel—are honestly factored in.

This 'development' model is anti-poor. Opposing them, in fact, is in consonance with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's governance agenda, unveiled in the President's address to Parliament on June 9. It swears by '*sabka saath, sabka vikas*' or inclusive development and goes on to say: "...my government commits itself to the goal of poverty elimination. With a firm belief that the first claim on development belongs to the poor, the government will focus its attention on those who need the basic necessities of life most urgently. It will take necessary steps to provide security in its entirety to all citizens, through empathy, support and empowerment." It is precisely these people-centric issues that the 'listed' individuals and

NGOs are advancing. Intriguingly, the IB report was leaked the very day after this speech. Is it to scuttle Modi's pro-poor agenda? The jury is out!

Back to the Emergency. Even after four decades, this dark era continues to haunt the nation. Writing in Outlook in June 2010, Arundhati Roy wrote: "June 26 is the 35th anniversary of the Emergency. Perhaps the Indian people should declare that this country is still in a state of Emergency." When the UPA government threatened Maoist sympathisers with imprisonment under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, rights activists retorted: "We consider this as an attack on civil society reminiscent of the Emergency era." Anchoring CNN-IBN's Face the Nation debate on the censorship of Prakash Jha's movie Raajneeti, Sagarika Ghosh's poser was, "Are we under Emergency?" What now, with some top guns pushing for a harsher POTA and the decimation of 'Maoists' by deploying the military?

Despite the fact that the Emergency is remembered and recalled whenever any blatantly unlawful act or excess is committed, people at large, particularly those of the younger generation, have no idea as to what it was all about. On the eve of the 36th anniversary of the Emergency, veteran journalist Kuldeep Nayar wrote: "The new generation must understand that today's non-governance or misgovernance is the fallout of what Indira Gandhi had done 36 years ago by destroying an established democratic order.... How do you make the new generation relate to the Emergency imposed some 36 years ago this week? I have been asked this question many a time...I do not have an answer."

Nayar's anguish is proof enough as to how this crucial part of India's freedom-killing post-Independence history has been pushed under the carpet!

At the peak of the Emergency, when Indira Gandhi proclaimed that "food is more important than freedom", JP had thundered: "Freedom became one of the beacon lights of my life and it has remained so ever since. Freedom...transcended the mere freedom of my country and embraced freedom of man everywhere and from every sort of trammel—above all it meant freedom of the human personality, freedom of the mind, freedom of the spirit. This freedom has become a passion of my life and I shall not see it compromised for bread, for security, for prosperity, for the glory of the state or for anything else."

According to some accounts, JP was Modi's guiding beacon during his long sociopolitical journey. Will Modi—who worshipped at the 'temple of democracy' before entering it—honour his icon's freedom agenda or let petty minds belittle it? This is the billion people question for Modi!

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black or Number Two money floating about is frightening. Unfortunately, the existence and circulation of number two money has become a fact of life in India and is taken for granted. The circulation of black money domestically and the volume of unaccounted stashes abroad together constitute a great danger to the Indian economy. The two have to be addressed simultaneously. The Modi government's next target should be the black money in motion at home and an assault on it brooks no delay.

Book Review

Life story of a crusader

It is a book that needed to be written. It is a book that needs to be read. Penned by Rohini Gawankar, Mrinal Gore's close friend and colleague of over six decades, it is an inspiring, virtually eye-witness account of one of India's tallest women leaders. Yet the book - published on the International Women's Day, 2014 - is much more than that - to an extent it is the quintessential life story of that band of Indian Socialists that participated in the freedom struggle and who were staunch practitioners of their "spade-prison-vote" philosophy to achieve "complete economic, social and political equality." I can think of Pramila and Madhu Dandavate, Champa and Madhu Limaye, Sudha and Sadanandu Varde, Pramila and Prabhubhai Sanghvi, Veena and Pannalal Surana, Ratan and Baban D'souza or Mangla and GG Parikh, and scores of other such socialist couples for whom sacrifice for their beliefs has been a way of life.

Written with great warmth and affection, Rohini Gawankar recounts the various stages in Mrinal's life, "without resorting to any kind of exaggeration, or making the subject larger than life..." as Bhai Vaidya, President of the Socialist Party (India) states in the Preface.

At the outset the author admits that the book was written in English at the behest of many, who felt that this would ensure a wider readership. It is immediately apparent that this is not a medium that she is very comfortable with. Yet, go beyond the lacunae of language and you find a very moving and enriching story of a determined, generous and warm-hearted woman who dedicated her

life to the empowerment of women and ameliorating the everyday hardships of the common man. Of an incorruptible politician's fight for equality and justice, who did not compromise the socialist values she believed in till her last. Of a socialist leader who rose from the ranks to become the first woman Leader of the Opposition in the Maharashtra assembly and went on to become a Member of Parliament and had the courage of her convictions to turn down ministership at the Centre, not once but twice. Of a brave young woman widowed at 30, with a five-year-old daughter, who despite stringent financial circumstances and parental duties fulfilled the dream she and her husband Keshav had set out to achieve. Of a pair of young socialists belonging to different castes, (she, a woman from the Chandraseniya Kayastha Prabhu caste and medical student; he, a Brahmin and full-time party worker) who got married despite parental disapproval - and how his conservative parents died without ever setting eyes on their "accomplished daughter-in-law".

Dr Gawankar divides the tome into chapters chronologically, dealing with various stages of Mrinal's life from her birth on June 24th, 1928 till her death on July 17th, 2012.

It was towards the end of her school days that Mrinal Gore came into contact with Rashtra Seva Dal - the cultural and social wing of the Socialist Party. Sane Guruji became her inspiration and Mrinal's intense involvement in the RSD activities brought her in close touch with dynamic leaders like S M

Joshi, Rammanohar Lohia, N G Goray, Madhu Limaye and Keshav Gore who mentored the young recruits in those idealistic pre-Independence days. This was the crucible of zealous commitment to principles, lofty intellectualism and fiery nationalism that forged the Mrinal Gore that we so admire.

The biography is aptly titled “Footprints of a Crusader”, as Bhai Vaidya describes Mrinal as a “socialist warrior” and goes on to state that the secret of her popularity was her “integrity, sincerity, simplicity, and genuine love for common people especially the down-trodden....fighting so bravely for simple needs like water, shelter, ration and price rise.”

Rohini Gawankar deals systematically with Mrinal’s work with women in the Goregaon neighbourhood, the vision she and Bandu, as her husband was affectionately called, shared, her slum rehabilitation efforts through Nagari Niwara Parishad, how she earned the famed moniker “*paaniwali bai*” and how she spearheaded the anti-price rise agitation in the early 1970s using the rolling pin as a dramatic symbol of women power. She also provides a graphic account of Mrinal’s torturous incarceration during the Emergency and her continued dedication to public good and social work even when virtually bedridden.

This book needs to be read for another reason also. It provides an important account of Indian politics of the last six decades, of the travails of the Socialists in their attempts to stamp their legacy on Indian public life and an insight into the dynamics of politics, especially in Maharashtra. Unfortunately, the importance and value of this

book are somewhat eroded due to the inadequate or incomplete introduction of several characters and this is evident throughout the volume. For instance, the Principal of Poddar High School is simply mentioned as “Bakshi sir” or the

**Footprints of A Crusader
(The Life Story of Mrunal Gore)**
Pps XVI+250

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officer in the Mantralaya who was helpful to Mrinal while she was in the Assembly and was her old classmate as “Saletoor”. There are too many such instances to enumerate here. True, the author states in her introduction that the book is based on personal knowledge and interviews and is “not intended as a work of reference but my personal tribute”. However, it would surely have not been too difficult for younger associates of Mrinal to obtain complete names, designations or correct details. I sincerely hope this shortfall will be rectified by the publishers in the next edition. A bit more careful editing and proofreading will enhance the readability of this admirable biographical tribute.

—Sonal Shah

(Continued from Page 3)

until the nation can have a consensus on some other formula. This means that the push currently given to Hindi will have to take into consideration the feelings and aspirations of each area and assure that there is no alienation of any language of any linguistic community. Modi’s fiat to quicken the pace of switchover to Hindi have created the alarm.

Meanwhile, the chauvinist supporters of Hindi should patiently wait till people all over the country are proficient in Hindi. Already, it is a compulsory subject in all the states except Tamil Nadu. Job seekers from different states too have underlined the necessity of learning Hindi. Films have spread the language throughout the country and one can converse in the south in Hindi or Hindustani. A few more years will see the entire non-Hindi speaking population speaking the language fluently.

Language is a very potent force. Urdu in preference to Bengali gave birth to Bangladesh. The step-motherly treatment meted out to Baluchi is at the back of demand for an autonomous Baluchistan in neighbouring Pakistan.

In fact, the rulers’ worry should be how to save regional languages like Punjabi which is being gradually discarded at Punjabi homes. The new generation is indifferent to their mother tongue and for them English, which brightens their employment prospects, comes first because it helps them to secure bread and butter.

Heritage is linked with languages and therefore leaders all over the country will have to devise ways and means whereby regional languages get succor. Without a long-term plan to reinvigorate them, some regional languages would fall by the wayside as the days go by. How many regional languages will survive 50 years hence is anybody’s guess.

We need freeways, but we also need forests.

Kalpana Sharma

Crimes against women have been constantly in the news. But crimes against nature remain largely unreported.

Given the current climate, with the Intelligence Bureau claiming that non-governmental organisations like the crusading international environmental group Greenpeace, are detrimental to India's progress, and with the ubiquitous 'foreign hand' making a serendipitous comeback, such crimes are likely to become invisible, noticed only by those who have been damned as 'obstructionist' or worse still, 'anti-national'.

As I tend to identify with that tribe, let me address this column to the elements that ensure that our physical environment does not become an endless landscape of roads and buildings, leaving no space for the unregulated, the wild, the unexpected that only the natural environment, left inviolate, provides.

A big part of this unregulated environment is trees. Today, they are in danger. They will drown as more dams are built, or the height of existing dams is raised. They will be razed to make way for infrastructure — roads and highways, airports, electric power stations. They will be stifled and killed by the concrete pavements surrounding them in our expanding cities. They will be excavated from our forests to make way for open-pit mines producing the minerals considered essential for a 'modern' India.

The former environment minister Jairam Ramesh and the current Prime Minister Narendra Modi both

spoke of the need for toilets rather than temples. Will anyone now say that India needs more forests not freeways? That even if factories, roads and railways, airports and sea ports are essential, so is a tree cover that saves the soil, replenishes the water, provides sustenance to millions of forest dwellers, cleans the air and absorbs some of the filth and poisons being generated by our modern lifestyles, poisons that will accumulate in the atmosphere and ruin the health of future generations.

The new environment minister, Prakash Javadekar, whose ministry is also supposed to take care of forests and address climate change, is a man in a hurry. He wants to clear 'obstacles' to progress in the form of pending environmental clearances. To do that, he wants to change the old criteria that classified forested areas as 'violate' or 'inviolate'. The latter category was formulated to ensure that nothing - no project, no mine, no dam - could disturb certain forested areas.

The parameters set out to decide whether a forest area is 'violate' or 'inviolate' are the quality of the forest area, the produce it generates, its biodiversity, hydrological, social, aesthetic and economic value. All these are essential. So in what way can this list be 'rationalised' or altered by the new minister? Why should these parameters be changed? The only reason would be to find a way to grant clearances to projects that will go against these criteria.

Forests are also about people, not just trees. An estimated 350-400

million people in 173,000 villages live within forests, or depend on them. That is not a small number. So if forests are destroyed, to make way for a mine, a factory, a dam, a power plant, there are people whose lives are also destroyed. The previous government passed laws protecting their rights, giving them the power to decide whether a forest area can be diverted to other uses.

What will happen to these rights? In the name of 'progress' and fast-tracking environmental clearances, will laws like the Forest Rights Act be revised or negated? If and when this happens, will the voices of those who have fought for the rights of forest dwellers, and for the protection of our remaining forests, be heard?

These are questions that need to be asked now, not after policies are put in place that facilitate the destruction of the natural environment and that deprive nature-dependent communities of their rights. If environmentalists are apprehensive about the future, they are justified. So far, nothing has been said or done to assuage their fears.

Despite this, what they can and must do is document the importance of fighting to preserve the environment - in the way the TreesIndia Group is doing on the India Biodiversity Portal (<http://treesindia.indiabiodiversity.org/>). Spend a few minutes on this site. It will give you a sense of the wealth that we have in India and what could disappear without a trace if we don't speak up now on behalf of nature.

Anti-Emergency Day

Every year we observe 25th /26th June as Anti-Emergency Day to remember those dark days when internal emergency was imposed in the country on the mid-night of 25th/26th June 1975 which continued for 19 months. Fundamental rights were suspended, press was gagged, voice of dissent throttled and more than one lakh opposition leaders and critics were detained without trial. Dictatorship was in full swing. Supreme Court, the highest seat of justice, ruled that even if a policeman shot dead a citizen without any cause - or even with malafide intention,

the victim had no avenue of redress.

On this day we also take stock of the prevailing situation to see as to what extent human rights are secure and what should be done to check the growing authoritarian tendencies in the governmental set up. At present the attack on the rights of the minorities, dalits, tribals, human right activists and other people's rights organizations are on increase in spite of the change of the government at the Centre. Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act i.e. UAPA was amended last

year to include threat to 'economic security' within the definition of the 'terrorist act' and thereafter the I.B. has dutifully brought out a report listing organizations which are posing threats to the 'economy' of India. Around 150 Maruti workers still languish in jail for the last two and half years which basically is a labour-management dispute in which around 2500 workers were rendered jobless and their families on starvation. News of large scale retrenchments are pouring in. Such instances are only tip of the iceberg.

- PUCL-CFD

Anti-Fascist Day

The June 25 / 26 observance needs to be reformulated so as to mark it as a day against political and social fascism.

For June 25/26 marks not only the declaration of Emergency in 1975. June 25 is also the Day in 1934 when a lethal bomb was hurled at Gandhi

and his cavalcade by Hindu right-wingers in Pune when he was on his anti-untouchability tour.

-Anil Nauriya

Chetavani Dharna

The two day 'Chetavni Dharna' of hundreds of Sardar Sarovar Project affected families at Jantar Mantar in Delhi concluded on June 25 with a strong warning to the Prime Minister and NDA Governmentt. to undertake a serious review of the illegal decision to raise the height of the Sardar Sarovar Project and assess the true costs and benefits of the roject, which is to cost Rs. 90000 crores, while the Government has decided to submerge 2.5 lakh people in the valley. In the name of Kutch and Saurashtra, Gujarat plans to dole out lakhs of hectares of command area land and water to the corporates and industries.

Briefing two key concerned Union Ministers Uma Bharti, Water Resources Ministry and Thavaar Chand Gehlot, Social Justice and Empowerment Ministry, Medha Patkar and delegates exposed the illegality of decisions of NCA and clearance to the project by the sub-groups (Environment and R&R), on the basis of official documents, court orders and Ministerial correspondence and in violation of Court order.

Smt. Bharti directed the officials of the Narmada Control Authority to look into the serious issues pointed out by the delegation and review the decisions in a participatory manner.

It was learned that Shri Gehlot was wrongly briefed by officials that the recent decision was in "compliance" of the Supreme court judgement while the reality is diametrically opposite and clearance to the dam is utter violation of the court.

Earlier in the day, Medha Patkar, Yogendra Yadav, AAP; Prashant Bhushan, Supreme Court lawyer, Nikhil Dey of National Campaign for People's Right to Information addressed the press. Shri Bhushan condemned the fast-track clearance approach of the Modi Government in all matters and attempt to quell the voice of people's movements, who are actually trying to raise real

people's issues in the country and challenge undemocratic decisions, as also loot Yogendra Yadav pointed out that the SSP decision is not just one step by the NDA Government, but is fully indicative of the approach of Shri Modi, which they would like to continue for five years. This means decisions would be towards destroying environment, suppressing the legitimate rights and voice of people. He challenged the Government against submerging hundreds of villages while 1000 crore judicial inquiry into R&R corruption is ongoing and called the country's aam aadmi and aam aurat to stand up against every undemocratic decision of the new government.

Medha Patkar expressed shock at the fact that decision of the Narmada Control Authority, is basically a political decision pushed by Narendra Modi, in violation of not just law and in contempt of court, but also by bypassing the three concerned Union Ministers, Uma Bharti, Thavaar Chand Gehlot and Prakash Javdekar, all from Madhya Pradesh who had virtually no role in the decision making process. She urged Shri Modi to face the reality, hear the people and come forward for a comprehensive review of the entire project, which is his duty as the Prime Minister of India.

Nikhil Dey of NCPRI denounced those ministers who call themselves *deshbhakts* but actually work against the interests of the people, if *acche din* would come then it will be for a few people at the cost of *bure din* for millions of poor people. He expressed hope that the time is not far away when they will rise against this tyranny.

Brinda Karat of CPIM challenged the arbitrary and anti-people decisions of Modi Sarkar, be it the 14 per cent rail fare hike, proposals to dilute labour laws of the country as also the move to drown 2.5 lakh people in the three states organized under a three decade old non-violent social movement..

Gautam Mody, Secretary of NTUI lent support to the struggle and called for coming together of farmers, workers and industrial labour to challenge the corporate agenda and the time has come when every people's movement in the country have to start talking to each other and understand the deep rooted inter-linkages of the issues and tyranny of the political class.

People raised slogans that the country does not belong to Ambanis and Adanis but to aam aadmi and adivasis, the farmers, fisherpeople, workers, small traders and toiling masses, who represent 90 per cent of the country's population.

Speaking at the protest, Supreme Court Lawyer Sanjay Parikh stated that the stipulation of the Narmada Award and Supreme Court has been fully violated by the Governments, especially in Madhya Pradesh where the illegal policy of encashment has led to absolute loot of tribals and poor people and massive corruption.

Alok Agrawal, struggling for the rights of oustees for Indira Sagar, Omkareshwar etc for more than 20 years challenged the illegality in dam after dam including SSP and called for a complete review of the cascade of dams on the Narmada which is displacing lakhs of family and submerging lakhs of hectares of forest and agricultural land. Advocate Clifton D'Rozario, Organising Secretary AICCTU, told the gathering that time has come again for the tillers and toilers to stand up against the inhuman displacement and provide an example to movements of this country.

A team of MPs and distinguished citizens would visit the Narmada valley very soon, mostly before the beginning of the monsoon session of Parliament.

Concluding the two-day dharna, a *mashaal juloos* was taken out by the protesters and it was resolved that satyagraha will be held in every village of the submergence area.

—Meera

(Continued from Page 5)

in the law, such as the Minimum Wages Act, or the Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, which makes it mandatory for workers to be registered when migrating across states, they are rarely enforced. There is a very low conviction rate for violating laws, and protesting, unionizing, and striking is more

likely to result in imprisonment or being branded Maoists and terrorists, than it is grievance redressal. For those who can, the payoff from going abroad, often in massive debt, and living amidst, war, hardship, and exploitation is higher than experiencing diminishing security from labour authorities and courts

at home, while continuing to be deemed an obstruction to economic growth.

For more data and details of court judgments, see the India Exclusion Report 2013–14, released on 25 June 2014.

How GM crops harm farmers scientific evidence grows

Bharat Dogra

As the controversy over GM (genetically modified) or GE (genetically engineered) crops has peaked in recent years, so has the scientific evidence regarding how harmful these crops can be for farmers and farming, as well as more broadly for health and environment. These issues are inter-linked as any claim of increase in yield of food crops is meaningless, if the food produced is unsafe or unhealthy.

An eminent group of scientists from various countries who constitute the Independent Science Panel have said in their conclusion after examining all aspects of GM crops: "GM crops have failed to deliver the promised benefits and are posing escalating problems on the farm. Transgenic contamination is now widely acknowledged to be unavoidable, and hence there can be no co-existence of GM and non-GM agriculture. Most important of all, GM crops have not been proven safe. On the contrary, sufficient evidence has emerged to raise serious safety concerns, that if ignored could result in irreversible damage to health and the environment. GM crops should be firmly rejected now."

According to the report of the Independent Science Panel, "The consistent finding from independent research and on-farm surveys since 1999 is that genetically modified (GM) crops have failed to deliver the promised benefits of significantly increasing yields or reducing herbicide and pesticide use. The instability of transgenic

lines has plagued the industry from the beginning, and this may be responsible for a string of major crop failures."

Summarising the evidences of the last three decades on GM crops Prof Jack A. Heinemann, Director, Centre for Integrated Research in Biosafety, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand recently wrote, "Those countries choosing to innovate in agriculture using GM are demonstrating lower productivity increases and greater dependence on chemical inputs in all crops compared to economically and environmentally comparable countries choosing to not use GM crops."

Prof. Heinemann continues, "The cost of GM seeds is the fastest growing expense for U.S. farmers who are simultaneously suffering from weeds resistant to the herbicides excessively used on GM crops and pests resistant to the insecticides over-used in Bt crops. That likely would be India's experience had it commercialised Bt brinjal which was developed with the least effective form of Bt for the target pest."

These statements on overall world-level experience of GM crops should be heeded by those who make high claims on behalf of GM crops on the basis of highly manipulated data. Before coming to more detailed evidence on yields and safety, let's first look at the some inherent weaknesses of GM technology.

Several scientists involved in studying the implications and impacts

of genetic engineering got together at the International Conference on 'Redefining of Life Sciences' organised at Penang, Malaysia, by the Third World Network. They issued a statement (the Penang Statement, or PS) which questioned the scientific basis of genetic engineering. This statement said:

"The new biotechnology based upon genetic engineering makes the assumption that each specific feature of an organism is encoded in one or a few specific, stable genes, so that the transfer of these genes results in the transfer of a discrete feature. This extreme form of genetic reductionism has already been rejected by the majority of biologists and many other members of the intellectual community because it fails to take into account the complex interactions between genes and their cellular, extracellular and external environments that are involved in the development of all traits.

"It has thus been impossible to predict the consequences of transferring a gene from one type of organism to another in a significant number of cases. The limited ability to transfer identifiable molecular characteristics between organisms through genetic engineering does not constitute the demonstration of any comprehensive or reliable system for predicting all the significant effects of transposing genes."

In a widely quoted paper titled 'The Biotechnology Bubble' Dr. Mae-Wan Ho (who heads Bio-

Electrodynamics lab of the Open University in the UK), Joe Cummins (Professor Emeritus of Genetics in Canada) and Hartmut Meyer have summarised the results of several experiments, trials and commercial releases of GMOs. They write: "There are many signs of the problems caused in genetic engineering organisms. For every product that reaches the market, there are perhaps 20 or more that fail. It is particularly disastrous for animal welfare.

- * The "superpig" engineered with human growth hormone gene turned out arthritic, ulcerous, blind and impotent.

- * The 'supersalmon' engineered, again, to grow as fast as possible, with genes belonging to other fish, ended up with big monstrous heads and died from not being able to see, breathe or feed properly.

- * The latest clones of the transgenic sheep Dolly are abnormal and eight times as likely to die at birth compared with ordinary lambs.

- * Even products that reach the market are failing, including crops that have been widely planted.

The authors of this widely quoted paper (published in the *Ecologist*) concluded: "It is important to realise that the failures are not just teething problems. They are very much the result of a reductionist science and a hit or miss technology. The transgenic foods created are unwholesome, because they involve stressing the developmental and metabolic system of organisms out of balance. There are bound to be unintended effects including toxins and allergens, which current risk assessments are designed to conceal rather than reveal. The major problem is the instability of transgenic lines."

The Independent Science Panel (ISP) has stated, "By far the most insidious dangers of genetic engineering are inherent to the process itself, which greatly enhances the scope and probability of horizontal gene transfer and recombination, the main route to creating viruses and bacteria that cause disease epidemics. This was highlighted, in 2001, by the 'accidental' creation of a killer mouse virus in the course of an apparently innocent genetic engineering experiment. Newer techniques, such as DNA shuffling, are allowing geneticists to create in a matter of minutes in the laboratory millions of recombinant viruses that have never existed in billions of years of evolution. Disease-causing viruses and bacteria and their genetic material are the predominant materials and tools for genetic engineering, as much as for the intentional creation of bio-weapons."

Marcello Buiatti (Plants Genetics Department, University of Florence), has concluded in an essay, "GMOs-facts and fiction, "Far from being the new science, which will solve all the problems of humanity in a short time, present day genetic engineering is based on obsolete knowledge and an equally obsolete and wrong conception of life."

Cesare Gessler, The ETH Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, says, "The products of genetic engineering today are still at the level of a dinosaur technology. We use genes, which are foreign to a species, not knowing where they are inserted or what else will change in the whole chain from gene to protein."

Dr. Peter Wills, theoretical biologist, Auckland University, says, "By transferring genes across species barriers, which have existed for aeons between species

like humans and sheep, we risk breaching natural thresholds against unexpected biological processes. For example, an incorrectly folded form of an ordinary cellular protein can under certain circumstances be replicative and give rise to infectious neurological disease."

Robert Mann, biochemist, University of Auckland, says, "The gene-manipulators claim they can foresee the evolutionary results of their artificial transposings of human genes into sheep, bovine genes into tomatoes, altered bacterial genes into eggplant, etc. But such claims are a reflection more of arrogance than of scientific analysis."

Now let's look more closely at some safety aspects. Recently seventeen distinguished scientists from Europe, USA, Canada and New Zealand wrote in a letter to the Prime Minister of India, "GM transformation can produce novel biochemical processes that are unpredictable and for which there is no natural history to assume are safe.

"The GM transformation process is highly mutagenic leading to disruptions to host plant genetic structure and function, which in turn leads to disturbances in the biochemistry of the plant. This can lead to novel toxin and allergen production as well as reduced/altered nutritional quality.

"It is not a question of if there are disturbances to gene function and biochemistry but to what degree they will be present within any given GM plant. For example, the levels of more than 40 proteins are altered significantly in the commercialised GM MON810 corn compared to equivalent non-GM corn, which included production of a new allergenic protein.

“Numerous animal feeding studies demonstrate negative health impacts of GM feed on kidney, liver, gut, blood cells, blood biochemistry and the immune system.

“Of greatest concern is that studies show negative health effects with GM crops that have already been approved and which have been grown commercially for 10-13 years.

This highlights the inadequacy of the original criteria and set of data on the basis of which marketing approval was and is still being granted.”

(to be Concluded)

Union Council of Ministers

National Election Watch (NEW) and Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) had sent a letter to the Hon'ble Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on the 20th of May, 2014 bringing to his notice the disturbing fact that the newly formed 16th Lok Sabha has a sizeable number of MPs (112 i.e. 21%) facing serious criminal charges and requesting him to include only clean representatives in his Cabinet. Shri Modi committed to critically examine MPs with self-declared criminal cases and fast tracking cases against them during the recent Lok Sabha campaign said, “the next Parliament would be cleaned by punishing the guilty”.

(NEW) and Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR) have analysed the self-sworn affidavits of 44 Ministers out of 46 Ministers (including the Prime Minister) from Lok Sabha 2014 and current Rajya Sabha. The details of Prakash Javadekar and Nirmala Sitharaman were not analysed as they are not currently members of either house.

Ministers with Criminal Cases: Out of the 44 Ministers analysed, 13 (30%) Ministers have declared criminal cases against themselves.

Ministers with Serious Criminal Cases: 8 (18%) Ministers have declared serious criminal cases including cases related to attempt to murder, communal disharmony, kidnapping, electoral violations, etc.

Ministers with cases related to causing Communal Disharmony: Uma Bharti from Jhansi constituency, Uttar Pradesh of BJP has declared a case Promoting enmity between different groups on grounds of religion, race, place of birth, residence, language, etc., and doing acts prejudicial to maintenance of harmony (IPC Section-153A)

Ministers with cases related to Electoral Violations: Uma Bharti of BJP from Jhansi constituency, Uttar Pradesh, has declared a case related to illegal payments in connection with an election (IPC Section-171H). Upendra Kushwaha of Rashtriya Lok Samta Party from Karakat constituency, Bihar and Ram Vilas Paswan of LJP from Hajipur constituency, Bihar have each declared a case related to Bribery (IPC Section – 171E)

Corepati Ministers : Out of the 44 Ministers analysed, 40 (91%) are corepatis.

Average Assets: The average assets per minister is Rs.13.47 crores.

High Asset Ministers: 5 Ministers have declared more than Rs.30 crores worth of assets: ranging from Rs. 30 crore+ to Rs.113 crore+

Low Asset Ministers: A total of 4 Ministers have declared assets less than Rs. 1 crore: from Rs. 65 lacs+ to Rs. 96 lacs+

Education Details of Ministers: 8(18%) Ministers have declared that have an education qualification of 12th pass or below while 35(80%) Ministers have declared having an educational qualification of graduate or above.

Age Details of Ministers: 9(20%) Ministers have declared their age to be between 31 to 50 years while 33(75%) Ministers have declared their age to be between 51 to 70 years and 2 Ministers have declared their age to be above 70 years.

Gender Details of Ministers: There are 7 (15%) women ministers out of a total of 46 ministers.

For more details visit :
www.myneta.info

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