

The difference between a moral man and a man of honor is that the latter regrets a discreditable act, even when it has worked and he has not been caught.
—H. L. Mencken

Jailing of a Prime Minister

Pakistan's former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif has been sentenced to ten years imprisonment by an anti-corruption court in Islamabad. His daughter and son-in-law have also been sentenced to different periods of imprisonment. The Pakistan Supreme Court had earlier removed Sharif from the office of the prime minister and disqualified him permanently from taking part in elections. While the corruption charges against him may be true, there is a political angle too. Sharif had become the bête noire of the armed forces (which virtually rule the country behind the façade of democracy) for quite some time now and for several reasons. Now his being sent to jail days before the general elections in Pakistan (scheduled for 18th of this month) will effectively prevent him from campaigning for his party PML(N).

It is no secret that cricketer-turned politician Imran Khan enjoys excellent rapport with the Army top brass and his party, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf which is being indirectly backed by the armed forces of Pakistan in the coming elections. It is this support which had made Imran "brimming with newfound confidence" the New York Times reported in May. This support has also brought him many new adherents. His election rallies are drawing large crowds mainly because of his proximity to the Army. The exit of Nawaz from the political scene in Pakistan will make Imran's electoral victory a near certainty. Few politicians in Pakistan are known to be paragons of probity in public life, Imran Khan included. Benazir Bhutto's husband Asif Ali Zardari became so notorious for corruption that he came to be known as the "Men Per Cent" Prime Minister. So, it is difficult to believe that corruption is the sole cause of the downfall of Nawaz Sharif. Pakistan watchers believe Nawaz was removed because of his running feud with the Army and the ISI, especially the latter. If Imran's party eventually wins a majority in the new Parliament and Imran becomes the Prime Minister, he is expected to strike a mutually beneficial relationship with the Army. The Army will support him as long as he does not try to be "independent" and override the brass hats. Imran has nothing to worry about the relationship with India; the Army will look after it. As long as Imran feathers his own nest and does not come into conflict with the Army, he will have nothing to fear about. As far as India is concerned there is no cause of either cheer or disappointment if Imran becomes the next Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Chances of cooperation in monsoon session

REFLEX ACTION

Nitya Chakraborty

The monsoon session of Parliament beginning on July 18 is expected to see sharpest confrontation between the BJP and the Congress led opposition making the smooth functioning of the proceedings of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha impossible. Right now, the political temperature has hotened so much that any talk of cooperation being mentioned by the ruling party leaders for passing the bills, is being dealt with contempt by the Congress and the other opposition leaders. The Congress President Rahul Gandhi is in a most foul mood vis a vis the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and he is looking for any opportunity to hit back at the PM. Mr. Modi and senior BJP leaders open diatribes against the Gandhi family, have widened the area of confrontation and in all possibility, the coming Parliament session, will be a victim of that.

The BJP led Government is worried about the passing of the key economic bills which were earlier issued as ordinances as the Government leadership thought it fit that those needed emergency action and the official legislation for malities could be taken up later in the monsoon session. These include the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (Amendment) Bill replacing the ordinance and the Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill replacing the ordinance. The IBC Bill amendment recognizes home buyers as financial creditors and allows promoters of MSME to bid for their stressed firms if they are not willing defaulters. Minister Arun Jaitley fought hard to promulgate the ordinance. Though he is recuperating now and the finance ministry is being looked after by Piyush Goyal, Jaitley is making all efforts along with the PMO to ensure that both these bills get Parliament's approval since the provisions were given immediate effect via ordinances.

The worry for the Government is that any failure by the Parliament to pass these two bills during the monsoon session, will make a mess of the Government decisions. The winter session of

Parliament generally meets in the second half of November and this year, Prime Minister is in such frame of mind that he might opt for preponing the Lok Sabha poll from April/May 2019 to November/December this year. The finance ministry does not want to take any risks about these two bills and there are desperate efforts to persuade the opposition to support the two bills at least in the coming monsoon session.

All indications suggest that the Congress and the other opposition parties are not ready to allow smooth sailing for these two bills in Rajya Sabha where they have majority. Even before the bills are taken for consideration, the ruling party and the opposition will confront on the issue of election of the Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha. The present deputy chairman P J Kurian's term expires before the session starts and the BJP is planning to put up a candidate of the ruling combination for the deputy chairman post knowing that the NDA has no majority in the Rajya Sabha. The Congress is now in a mood for total opposition unity and the Congress President is ready to support a candidate of any other opposition party who will be the common candidate of the opposition. There is every possibility that the entire opposition will opt for a senior Rajya Sabha member of Trinamool Congress as the opposition nominee. If there is total unity of the opposition, it is difficult for the ruling BJP to have its candidate elected in a contest, even taking into account that AIADMK MPs will not be voting for the opposition candidate.

Amidst this atmosphere of confrontation, the talk of the Government leaders including the Prime Minister for cooperation from the Congress and the opposition in passing the vital two bills, will not cut any ice. The monsoon session of Parliament, which will have 18 sittings, will also consider the triple talaq bill, and constitutional status for the National Commission for OBCs. Since the campaign for the Lok Sabha elections has already started, all the political parties will look at the issues from their respective political mileage. As regards triple talaq bill, the situation is very complicated and the BJP is directly trying to win over the educated and forward looking Muslim women through it stand. The Congress, as a part of its strategy, will not allow BJP to make political mileage out of its actions just few months ahead of the crucial Lok Sabha poll.

Of the 40 odd bills listed for consideration in the budget session, only two were approved by the Lok Sabha without discussion. The key pending bills which could be taken up in the monsoon session includes also the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Bill 2013 which requires investigating agencies to get more sanction of the appropriate authority in the government to investigate officials including retired ones. Another key pending bill is the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill, 2017 under which a bail in clause has been proposed as one of the resolution tools in case of insolvency in a bank wherein depositors will have to bear a part of the cost of the resolution by a corresponding reduction in their claims. This bill has been flayed by the experts as also the depositors organizations and the bank unions. Though the finance ministry is claiming that there is no threat to the security of deposits, experts are saying that the bank deposits have been put at a risk due to the provisions of the bill. There will be severe opposition at attack against the provisions of this bill. The ad hoc finance minister will have a tough task in justifying this bill in Parliament. (IPA)



Children playing on the deserted near Jamia Masjid during curfew like restriction in down town Srinagar.

Recalling an ex-RSS chief's news

FOCUS

L.S. Herdenia

I do not hold any brief for Indira Gandhi as far as her decision to impose Emergency is concerned. There is no doubt that the Emergency period will be recorded as a black chapter in the democratic history of the country. But certainly I have every reason to differ with Arun Jaitley when he compares Indira Gandhi with Hitler. Hitler perhaps was the cruelest ruler in history. Besides destroying all democratic institutions of Germany, which had a glorious history of democracy, he targeted the Jews and wanted their total physical annihilation. But Indira did not target any particular community in our country there are leaders who orchestrated the genocide of people belonging to a particular community in Gujarat. Hitler's cruelty did not have any limits. Because of his brutal attitude, even a great scientist like Albert Einstein had to leave his motherland. But during Emergency there is no record of anybody having left India because of the so called atrocities committed by Indira Gandhi. Editorial regime. On the contrary, stalwarts like Jayaprakash Narayan were allowed access to the best possible medical help. Similarly J. B. Kriplani, a

great freedom fighter and Gandhi's chosen disciple, was not arrested despite the fact he continued to lead public stir against Emergency. In fact, Kriplani complained that he had been left out while all his friends were given the privilege of imprisonment. Hitler not only destroyed democracy but destroyed Germany itself. But Jaitley must appreciate the fact that Indira restored democracy, ordered elections fully knowing that total annihilation awaited her. Perhaps, she was aware that the voters were going to punish her severely for her decision to impose Emergency. Here I will like to draw attention that if Emergency was so bad why then the RSS congratulated Indira Gandhi when the Supreme Court gave the judgment in her favour. MD Deoras, in his letter from Yerwada Central Jail, dated 10th November 1975 wrote "Respected Smt. Gandhi, Prime Minister Government of India, New Delhi, let me congratulate you and five judges of the Supreme Court have declared the validity of your election". Prior to that Deoras in his

"The Sangh has been referred to in connection with the movement of Jaya Prakash Narayan. The name of the Sangh has been linked with the Bihar and Gujarat movements again and again and without any cause. In reference to the clarification of the fact that the Sangh has no connection with these movements." Deoras repeatedly reassured the Prime Minister to "set free thousands of RSS workers and remove the restriction on the Sangh. If done so power of selfless work on the part of lakhs of RSS volunteers will be utilised for national upliftment (government as well as non-government)". Jaitley claims that Indira Gandhi was like Hitler, why the top brass of Sangh, of which he was a part in 1975 and even now, accepted Indira Gandhi as leader. There was a very popular slogan during Emergency: "Emergency ke saamne, Vidya, Sanjay, Bansilal". At that time Vidya Charan Shukla was the Information & Broadcasting Minister, Bansilal was the Defence Minister and Sanjay Gandhi (Indira's younger son) was the most trusted person of Mrs Gandhi. All the three were the

main executioners of Emergency. Later BJP co-opted both V. C. Shukla and Bansilal. V. C. Shukla contested Lok Sabha election on BJP ticket; BJP became part of the Haryana state ministry headed by Bansilal. Sanjay died in an air crash in 1980 but BJP admitted his wife Maneka Gandhi in the party and made her a central minister and she continues to be so. To the best of our information Maneka Gandhi has not condemned Emergency so far. If Indira was like Hitler, the V. C. Shukla who monitored the censorship on media, Why did BJP reward Shukla? This was a volte face on the part of BJP, the political wing of RSS. In the end it may be mentioned that RSS has admiration for Hitler. This admiration was reflected in some school textbooks of Gujarat. There was a big hue and cry against the act of the Gujarat government, which led to the removal of the laudatory references to Hitler. (IPA)

Conventional Crossword

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ACROSS
1 Faucets
4 Jewelled head-ornament
8 Predominating
9 Thunder god
12 Monkeys
14 First woman
15 Customer
19 Story in parts
21 Liable
22 Motten rock
24 Sacrificial table
27 Flower
28 Complete agreement
30 Flowed back
31 Inches

DOWN
2 Small child
3 Certain
4 Hint
5 Unsuitable
7 Turn commander
7 Away
10 Poison
13 Mineral spring
14 Landed property
16 Everyone
17 Uttering wildly
19 Gann
20 Silly
23 Drug yielding plant
25 Bath
26 Densucumber
28 Word of acceptance

SUDOKU: 2248

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Yesterday's Solution 2247

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Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 256

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