

When you go into court you are putting your fate into the hands of twelve people who weren't smart enough to get out of jury duty
Norm Crosby

Respecting SC decisions

Indian political parties, irrespective of their ideology, have always accepted decisions of the Supreme Court respectfully, even if they did not always were happy with some of the apex court's decisions. But there never was any intent on their part either to defy or to circumvent the decisions and directives of the topmost court. Unfortunately that is changing. Outfits known as belonging to the Sangh Parivar are showing a tendency to defy the Supreme Court when its decisions do not subscribe their political interests or objectives. This was first seen when the Babri Masjid dispute arose in the nineties of the last century. The "faith" of the Hindus that is those Hindus that these organizations purported to represent, about the Ram Janambhoomi was claimed to be above court decisions. No evidence, it was said, was necessary to prove that Ram was born at the place indicated by him. Eventually, "faith" won, the mosque was demolished.

The same tendency is becoming evident again. Recently the Supreme Court allowed the entry of women in the age group 10 to 50 into the Sabarimala temple in Kerala. But "devotees" who were devoted more to the Sangh Parivar than to Lord Ayyappa defied the apex court order. They resolutely put up a human barrier and day after day frustrated the attempts of women to enter the temple. BJP president Amit Shah supported the "devotees" who flouted the apex court directive. He asked the courts not to give 'impractical' orders. When the Kerala Government arrested those found engaged in acts of violence and vandalism, Shah thundered against the Kerala Government and warned it would be thrown out. He justified his stand by saying that he was standing by the "people" (even if it meant going against the Supreme Court).

Now the Supreme Court has once again come in the crosshairs of the Hindutva. Much to their chagrin and discomfort, the apex court has adjourned the hearing of the Ram Mandir-Babri Masjid dispute to 2019. The construction of the Ram Mandir is a live election issue which can polarize voters along religious lines and mobilize the Hindu vote for the BJP. The Parivar is not prepared to wait till then. In order to bypass the Supreme Court, it is now demanding that an ordinance be promulgated by the Centre. Never mind that the BJP does not enjoy majority in the Rajya Sabha and the ordinance, even if passed by Lok Sabha will not be passed by Rajya Sabha. The ordinance will help keep the mandir issue alive and yield electoral dividend. And that is what really matters.

Former MP CMs in unsavoury controversies

REFLEX ACTION

LS Herdenia

Two former chief ministers of Madhya Pradesh - Babulal Gaur of the BJP and Digvijaya Singh of the Congress - find themselves caught in fierce controversies.

Babulal Gaur, nearing 90, has announced his intention to contest from his traditional constituency in Bhopal. Gaur has been holding this seat since 1973, when he was elected as the joint candidate sponsored by non-Congress parties. Since then, he never looked back and has won ten consecutive Vidhan Sabha elections. After Uma Bhaarti's ouster he became the chief minister in 2004 but was asked to quit due to reasons which are not known even today. In 2005, Shivraj Singh Chouhan replaced him. He joined the Shivraj cabinet and handled several departments. But, again, for some strange reason, he was asked to resign. For public consumption, it was said that he had to go because he had crossed 75 years of age. Along with him, another minister, Sartaj Singh - the only Sikh member in the council of ministers - was also asked to resign. But, subsequently, the BJP president said that there was no such criterion. A few months ago, Gaur announced that he wanted to contest the 2018 Vidhan Sabha elections. He repeated his resolve after Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during a rally in Bhopal, while speaking to him made a cryptic remark "Gaur Sahab, ek baar aur."

But now, he is being challenged by a section of his own party. The other day, a group of party men performed a "Yagna" and recited "Sunderkand" of Ramcharitmanas. The objective was to oppose the likely candidature of Gaur from the Govindpura constituency. BJP workers, who held this religious ritual, made it clear that they were not only against Gaur but also against his daughter-in-law Krishna Gaur. Even after this "Yagna" Gaur reiterated his resolve to contest for the eleventh time. The controversy surrounding Digvijaya Singh is of a different nature. Digvijaya Singh has repeatedly announced that he has no intention to contest any

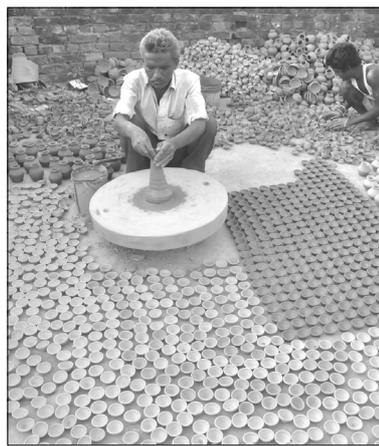
election and that he has no ambition to become chief minister again. For a long time Singh has not been given importance in the party programmes. It has been noticed that Congress president Rahul Gandhi does not take cognizance of his presence in the party programmes. Perhaps, referring to him being ignored in the party, he is reported to have remarked that "the Congress loses votes when I campaign for the party". He said this was the reason why he was skipping election rallies. In a viral video, Singh is heard saying that his party's votes get reduced if he campaigns for it. The video was recorded on October 13, but it went viral on a day that Congress president Rahul Gandhi was in the state to campaign for the Assembly elections. Significantly, Singh, a two-term chief minister of Madhya Pradesh, has been conspicuous by his absence from the programmes and the rallies which Gandhi has been addressing over the past few weeks. In the video, in which he is seen talking casually to party workers at the residence of MLA Jitu Patwari in Bhopal, Singh also advises Congress workers to campaign for all party candidates wholeheartedly.

"Dekho, khawaab dekhte rah jaoge agar kaam nahi kiya to. Nahi banegi sarkar agar aise kaam kiya to. Jisko ticket mile, chahе dushman ko mile, jitaao. You would continue dreaming if you don't work. You can't form the government if you work like this. Even if a ticket is given to your rival in the party, you should ensure his victory", he is heard telling party workers. When contacted, Singh said the video was not being shown in a proper manner. "If you hear the first part, you will understand why this is so," he said. However, considering Congress' legacy of factional fights, the

video has triggered speculation that despite the party high command's best efforts, factionalism is smoldering in the Madhya Pradesh Congress. Many also wonder if Singh has been asked to keep a low profile because he is in the habit of making controversial statements on issues ranging from "Hindu terror" to Batla House encounter of 26/11 and the recent tweet in which he showed a bridge in Pakistan as one under construction in Bhopal (which he quickly apologised for).

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan seized upon the chance to take pot shots at Congress and his old rival. "It is not us but his own party that has given him this pain. He is not there on posters nor is he addressing public meetings. Nobody had imagined that Congress would give such a road deal to its senior leader. At least the party should respect his stature," the CM told a news channel during his Jan Ashirwad Yatra. The Congress sought to play down the video "Digvijaya Singh is a respected leader of Congress. He is doing what the party has asked him to do. The chief minister should rather explain to people why he is so desperate that he has to accompany Vyapam scam accused Laxmikant Sharma on his Jan Ashirwad Yatra when he had kept him at bay after his arrest," said Bhupendra Gupta, state Congress media cell vice-chairman. The video also led to speculation that it was Singh's way of expressing unhappiness over being neglected in the party's campaign. In an interesting footnote to the episode, Singh's office issued a press release later that his programme for the evening had been partially modified. He was supposed to leave for Delhi from Morena by Shatabdi Express but would now fly by a special plane.

Sources in Congress say this is an indication that party president Rahul Gandhi, who was in Madhya Pradesh for the past couple of days, has taken Singh's video seriously and the change of programme is at his behest as he would now be accompanying Rahul in his special plane from Morena. (IPA)



A potter making earthen lamps ahead of Diwali festival the festival of light, in Moradabad

Training for ANSCB staff at RGCTC

PORT BLAIR, OCT 30/-/ A day-long duration training for the staff of A&N State Cooperative Bank Ltd supported by NABARD Port Blair was organized by Rajiv Gandhi Cooperative Training Centre (RGCTC) of A&N State Cooperative Union, Port Blair recently. Altogether 29 staff drawn from different branches of the bank of South Andaman attended the training. The main purpose of conducting the programme was to develop the skill, knowledge and capabilities on different aspects of Self Help Groups in order to make aware them for better functioning and development. This programme was arranged based on the new training manual on SHGs consisting of 17 modules for Micro Enterprises and Development designed and developed by RGCTC for training. After the training the SHGs could be made aware on each and every aspects of the SHG concept by these staff in their respective areas. In the training the participants were enlightened on each module using training tools like lecture/presentation, brain storming, games, Role play, case study and stories emulating the development of SHGs. Mr. Suresh Babu, RGCTC was the Resource person who, also earlier inaugurated the programme. In the concluding function, the General Secretary, A&N State Cooperative Union distributed Certificates to the trainees. Ms. Nandini, Faculty Member, RGCTC coordinated the programme.

Conventional Crossword

1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	
12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29

- ACROSS**
- Thoroughfare
 - Favourite
 - Limb
 - Gain by effort
 - Wrongdoing
 - Raised platform
 - Country
 - Control staff
 - Very hard mineral
 - Back of the neck
 - Farm birds
 - Spill
 - Prison official
 - Narrow beam
 - Make lace
 - Without sound
- DOWN**
- Mineral spring
 - Fodder
 - Obiteration
 - Send out
 - Spanish monetary unit
 - Confused state
 - Swarm
 - 40 winks
 - Allow
 - Free
 - Church recess
 - Hindu garment
 - Grease

SUDOKU: 2357

	8		3	1	3	5
	4	9				
2	9		3	7	6	1
			9			
8	3	4	6		5	4
		1			2	
5	7	9				

Yesterday's Solution 2356

8	9	2	6	5	1	7	4	3
5	4	3	7	8	2	9	1	6
7	6	1	3	4	9	2	8	5
4	5	7	2	1	3	8	6	9
1	3	9	8	6	7	4	5	2
6	2	8	4	9	5	1	3	7
2	7	5	1	3	8	6	9	4
9	8	6	5	2	4	3	7	1
3	1	4	9	7	6	5	2	8

Yesterday's Cross Word Solution 365

I	S	L	A	M	P	A	N	G
M	E	X	O	T	I	C	A	
A	N	G	E	R	A	C	T	S
G	S	E	I	N	E			
E	L	M	S	O	D	E	R	
S	O	I	L	S	E	M		
	R	O	O	F			S	
F	L	A	W	A	T	O	M	S
O	G	E	R	M	A	N	E	
E	W	E	R	E	R	E	C	T

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Companies forced to dole out big funds

FOCUS

Nitya Chakraborty

The central public sector enterprises, especially the blue chip ones, which have made good reserves through their consistent growth profile, are now targeted by the Modi government to pay for the policy lapses of the NDA regime. These companies like the ONGC, IOC as also the SBI and the LIC are paying the price of being profitable and high worth organizations under the administration of Narendra Modi.

The premier PSE ONGC is the major example of the anti-public sector approach of the present government. The situation has reached such a state in the finances of the ONGC that due to the Government's continuous intervention in the last four and half years, the debt of the ONGC rose to Rs.11,533 crore at the end of the financial year 2017-18 as compared to Rs.5,619 crore at the end of fiscal 2016-17. The ONGC Employees Mazdoor Sabha in a memorandum to the Prime Minister has alleged that the once cash rich PSE has reached a position of near bankruptcy as a result of the policies of the centre in the recent years. The Sabha has also mentioned that the ONGC is taking overdraft from the banks to pay the salaries of the staff. According to the employees, all these financial problems are taking place because of the

Government forcing the ONGC to take some decisions which are causing heavy losses to the company. In 2016, the Modi government forced the ONGC to acquire gas blocks in Krishna Godavari basin belonging to Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation for a total consideration of Rs. 8,000 crore. This, despite the fact that the GSPC's discovery in 2005 did not result in any production as late as 2015 even after a large investment of more than Rs.19,000 crore. The experts knew that the oil and gas with economic potential would not be available from this block, but still to serve the political interests of the BJP led Gujarat government, the centre forced the ONGC management to take over this barren block for discovering oil and gas.

Last year, the petroleum ministry, at the instance of PMO prepared a plan to offer 90 per cent participating interest to private players in 11 fields of ONGC and of Oil India Ltd for raising production in these so called ageing fields. But the studies made by the ONGC scientists say that these fields considered for private investment are among the better performing and the ONGC itself has spent a lot of funds for enhancing production from these fields. Losing them would mean a drop of 15 per cent in annual

output for the ONGC while the private players will get returns on the basis of investments made by the public sector ONGC. Equally disastrous, if not far more, is the decision of the Prime Minister Narendra Modi to jettison the country's premier defence manufacturing company Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) from the Rafale deal at the last minute and replacing this public sector by Anil Ambani's Reliance Defence. Prime Minister took this decision himself to damage the future of India's one of the public sector jewels when 96 per cent of the process of the deal involving HAL, was completed. Even before the visit in April 2015, foreign secretary S. Jaishankar said that "In terms of Rafale, my understanding is that there are discussions underway between the French company, our ministry of defence, and the HAL which is involved in this." HAL was involved in the discussions till a few days before the visit. HAL has been denied a work in which it has expertise and in which the French company was also interested. It could

have been a showpiece of perfect Make in India programme. Defence manufacturing is one of the priority sector identified under Make in India initiative which aims at increasing the manufacturing industry contribution in national GDP to 25 per cent. As a major defence aerospace defence sector enterprise in the country, HAL has taken a number of initiatives. HAL has given thrust on design and development to encourage indigenization of components, accessories and systems required for manufacture as well repair and overhaul of aircraft, engines, and associated systems. HAL was a perfect Indian partner for the Rafale deal and the French company Dassault CEO Eric Tappier was happy in having discussions with such an experienced public sector company like HAL but to the misfortune for HAL, Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not allow this to happen. HAL was dumped to accommodate a greenhorn in defence manufacturing in the last minute. What was most

shocking was that Defence Minister Nirmala Sitharaman did something unprecedented. She openly defamed her Ministry's high tech undertaking Hindustan Aeronautics Limited for its technological incompetence to defend the selection of Anil Ambani's new company as the offset partner in the Rafale deal. Defence Minister in her interaction with the women journalists in Delhi last month remarked that the HAL did not have required capability to produce Rafale and further later she observed that HAL and Dassault could not agree on production terms, so they could not go together. The responsibility of not concluding the agreement lay with the UPA government and not her government. Defence Minister's scathing attack on the capability of HAL has been immediately contested by the recently retired Chairman of the PSU T. Suvarna Raju in his interview to a leading daily the next day. He said "When HAL can build a 25 tonne Sukhoi 30 from raw material stage, then what are we talking about? We could have definitely done Rafale".

If the concerned Minister talks negatively about her own PSE as compared to a private company then the Indian PSEs cannot expect any positive thrust from this regime for their growth. (IPA)