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ISSN 2347-3193 Regd. No. RNI/No-45896/87, Vol. LVXLV, No. 02 February 2020 Rs. 100/- ~~₹~~ \$2

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## Today

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ISSN 2347-3193

Regd. No. RNI/No-45896/87

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#### Editorial Communications and Advertisement Queries

Tel: +91-11-23313567, +91-11-45785625  
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E-mail : namtodayjournal@gmail.com  
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#### Regional Director (South)

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#### Printed, Edited, Owned & Published by:

Ms. Pramoda Patel

#### Printed at:

Dhyani Print Process, 158 DSIDC Shed,  
Okhla Indl. Area, New Delhi-110020

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**NO. 28, No. 15, 1st floor, No. of figures, 60**

**EDITORIAL, subscriptions and advertisements:** Society for Environmental Communications, 41, Tagore Road, New Delhi 110062

**PHONE:** 91-11-4651-6000, 29955174, 29954110, 29955384, 29955389

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**Printed at:** Society for Environmental Communications, Printed at: International Press, 2nd Floor, 15, 204, 205, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase I, New Delhi 110020. India. and published at: 41, Tagore Road, New Delhi 110062.

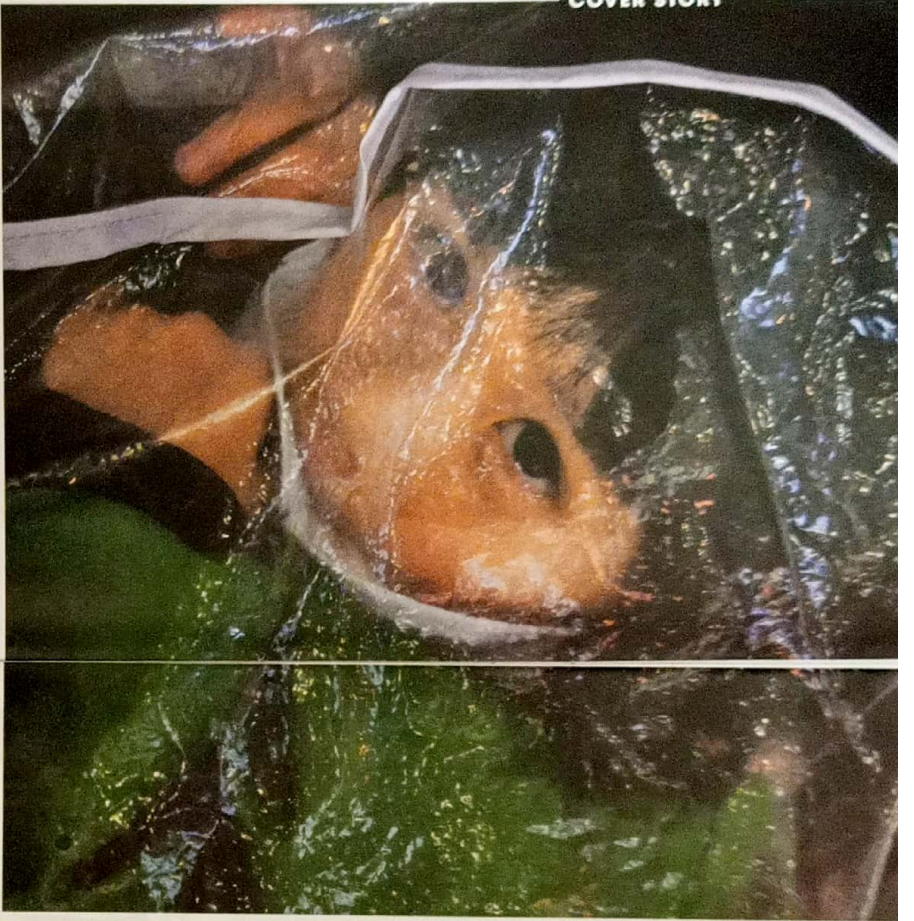
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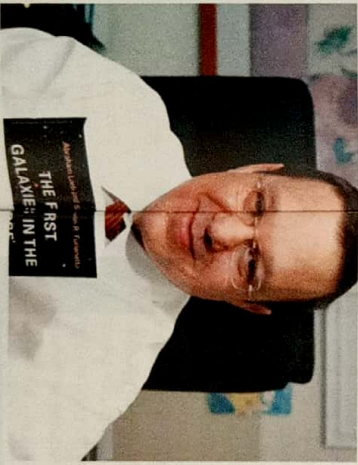


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ISSN 2231 - 0185  
E-ISSN 2581 - 5091  
www.worldfocus.in

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(P) ISSN 2230-8458

(O) EISSN 2581-5083

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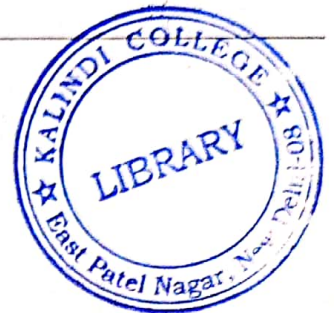
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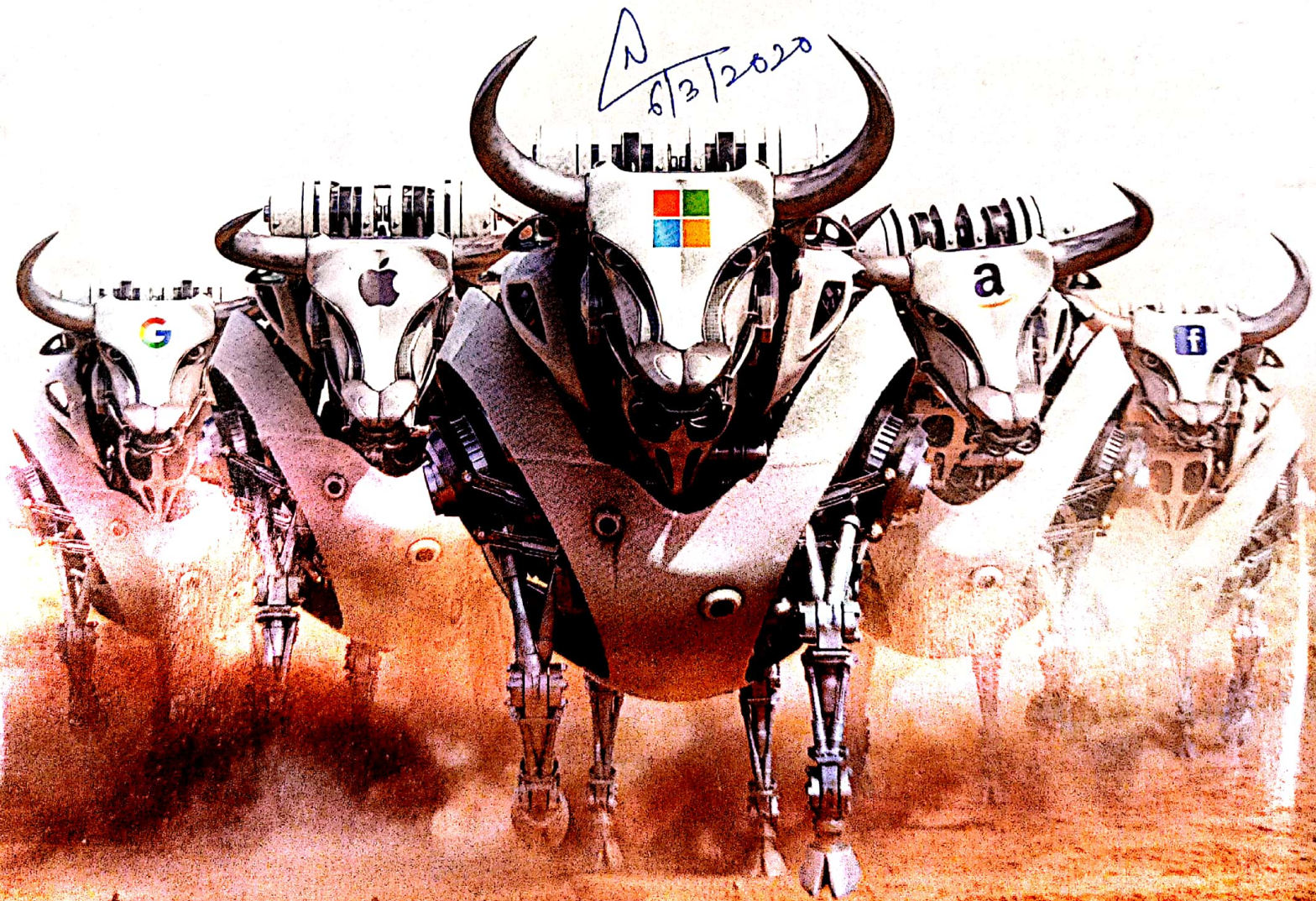
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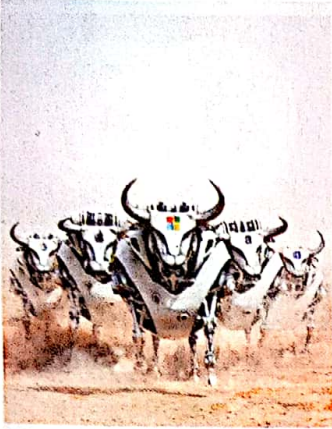


# Big tech's \$2trn bull run

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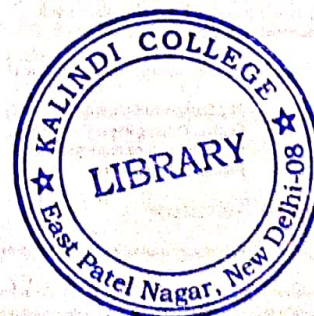
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Woking nine to five

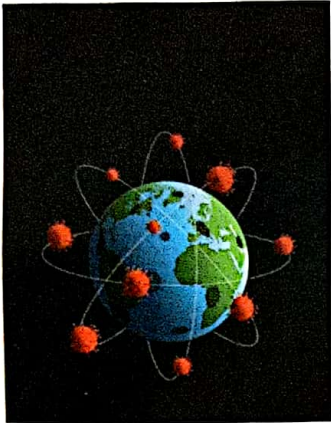
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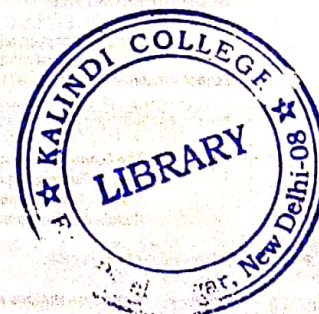
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- Manual Scavenging in Maharashtra

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### Personalisation of Leadership

An analysis of why the "openness" of political parties, which strengthens a country's democratisation process, in India has declined over the years and entry into top leadership posts has become difficult **page 50**

### Dimensions of Manual Scavenging

A study of the prevalence, nature, and extent of manual scavenging in Maharashtra looks at the role of the state and society in the abolition of this practice and the complexities of rehabilitation of those forced to do this work. **page 55**

### Pakistan's Female Health Workers

There is little acknowledgement of the severe risks faced by women health workers in polio eradication programmes, even as the global polio eradication initiative has unveiled a new gender strategy. **page 12**

**The Portentous India–Pakistan Escalation Dynamic**

10 The escalation dynamic between India and Pakistan and mutual miscalculation by the two countries could lead to a dangerous flare-up. — *Ali Ahmed*

**Fighting Polio, Courting Death**

12 The vulnerabilities and risks faced by women health workers in polio eradication programmes are scarcely acknowledged. — *Namrata R Ganneri*

**National Medical Commission Act: A Cure Worse than the Malady**

16 Billed by the government as the “biggest reform” in the medical profession, the NMC Act ran into severe resistance from the very profession whose lot it was supposed to improve. — *Vikas Bajpai*

**Unequal Access to Political Parties in India**

50 Open access to political parties has declined in India during the last few decades, preventing average citizens from taking the plunge into party politics. — *Prakash Sarangi*

**The Complexities of Liberation from Caste**

55 The multidimensional nature and extent of manual scavenging in Maharashtra is analysed, with specific insights and practice propositions drawn from the study. — *Shaileshkumar Darokar*

**Budget 2020–21**

A set of seven articles provides a critical evaluation of the allocations made in the Union Budget 2020–21, in the context of the economic slowdown.

**Fiscal Restraint Trumps Fiscal Stimulus**

19 The 2020 Union Budget has failed to provide any fiscal stimulus, based upon the assumption that there is no fiscal space for providing growth stimulus. — *Sudipto Mundle, Ajaya Sahu*

**Tax System Changes in the Budget: Confusing Signals**

23 Unduly optimistic estimates result in “tax terrorism,” lead to inefficient budget management, and have adverse impacts on state finances. — *M Govinda Rao*

**A Low Growth Budget for ‘Aspirational India’**

27 The government has exhibited a track record of aiding the process of wealth creation for corporate capital and throwing a few crumbs to the middle class in the Union Budget 2020. — *K P Kannan*

**Fiscal Consolidation Ex Post the ‘Escape Clause’**

31 Launching an “excessive deficit procedure” in India is inevitable for growth revival, which is crucial, especially when there is considerable ambiguity about why the “escape clause” was invoked in the Union Budget 2020. — *Lekha Chakraborty*

**Goal Setting for Indian Agriculture**

34 The 16-point action plan for agriculture laid down in the 2020 Union Budget does not make any fundamental improvements in the allocations towards subsidies and safety nets over agricultural investments. — *Ashok Gulati, Pritha Banerjee*

**Financial Sector in the Budget: Skating on Thin Ice?**

38 The lack of a long-term vision in the 2020 Union Budget for reviving an economy in downswing remains most conspicuous. — *Partha Ray, Parthapratim Pal*

**Union Budget and the Trade Sector**

41 The Union Budget for 2020–21 emphasised the need to restrict imports, and a number of measures were proposed to realise this objective. — *Biswajit Dhar, Ramaa Arun Kumar*

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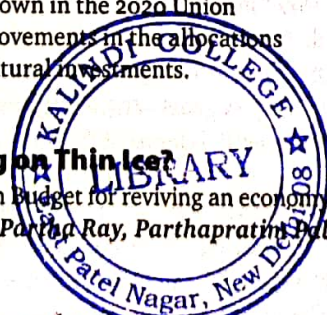
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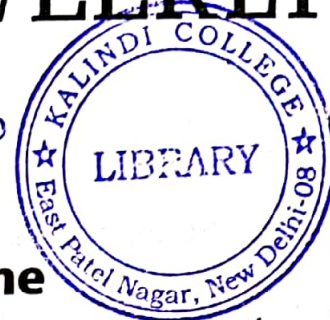
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## Sabka Vishwas Scheme

Designed as a tool to increase short-term revenue, the dispute resolution-cum-amnesty scheme will hamper the long-term objectives of tax policy and higher compliance by delinquent taxpayers. **page 15**

## Enabling Social Sustainability

Fiscal measures remain the biggest challenge for social sustainability in India: meagre public spending, loosely pursued regulation and impact measurement, limited access to finance, and weak CSR performance. **page 42**

## Judiciary on Human Sacrifice

The Supreme Court's decision in a human sacrifice case highlights the legal system's struggle with making sense of crimes motivated by superstitions and cultural beliefs. **page 12**

## Impact of Fiscal Populism

The impact of the onset of elections and government fragmentation on fiscal deficit between 1978–79 and 2016–17, a time period with simultaneous transitions in the economic and political landscapes in India **page 34**

## Intuitive Economics

The case of the contrasting history of hybrid vs "desi" breeds demonstrates how the innate-intuitive economic model helps ascertain when to use difference or division in cost-benefit analysis. **page 28**

**Questioning Citizenship-based Taxation in Budget 2020**

10 The proposal in the Finance Bill, 2020 to introduce taxation on the basis of citizenship for those non-resident Indians who do not pay tax in their countries of residence has proven to be controversial.  
— *Alok Prasanna Kumar*

**Human Sacrifice, Sentencing and the Death Penalty**

12 The Supreme Court’s judgment in *Ishwari Lal Yadav v State of Chhattisgarh* deviates from the principle of individualised sentencing and ignores evidence on the complex anthropological and psychological dimensions of human sacrifice. — *Anup Surendranath, Neetika Vishwanath & Preeti Pratishruti Dash*

**Sabka Vishwas Scheme: Settlement at the Cost of Equity**

15 Sabka Vishwas Scheme is a dispute resolution-cum-amnesty scheme, with an objective of generating revenue in the short term, that will reduce the taxable capacity of the state and motivation towards compliance in the long run.  
— *Errol D’Souza, Astha Agarwalla*

**India’s ‘Three Pest Campaign’**

18 Over the last few years, the central government has declared certain species of wild animals as “vermin” in some states in an arbitrary manner without any scientific assessments, thus allowing uncontrolled hunting of these animals. — *Ritwick Dutta*

**Intuitive Economics and the Outcome of an Operation**

28 The contrasting history of hybrid versus “desi” breeds in agriculture as opposed to animal husbandry illustrates how common people intuitively know when to use difference and when to use division in cost-benefit analysis. — *Milind Watve, Ojas S V*

**Persistent Fiscal Deficits and Political Economy Transitions**

34 The impact of macroeconomic and political economy factors on India’s fiscal deficit between 1978–79 and 2016–17—a period when the country witnessed simultaneous economic and political structural transformations—has been investigated in this study. — *Amarendu Nandy, Abhisek Sur & Santanu Kundu*

**Investments for Social Sustainability in India**

42 The current status of social development perspective and the role of government, corporate and social enterprises in delivering social sustainability in India are examined. — *Shubham Kumar, Tapas Kumar Giri*

**Who Is Afraid of Pakistan’s Aurat March?**

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— *Afiya Shehrbano Zia*

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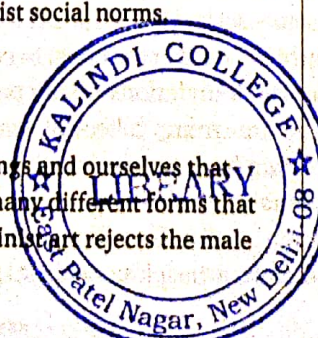
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The linking of the National Population Register and the National Register of Citizens threatens to disenfranchise crores of people, rendering them stateless and without rights. **page 25**

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**Addressing the Urban Water Crisis**

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**Bihar's Undertrials**

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**Muslim League in Kerala**

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**Lapses of Indian Pharma**

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**Supreme Court Judgment on Reservations**

- 7 The implementation of reservations is constitutionally mandated and cannot be left to the state's discretion.

**LIC's Stake Sale**

- 8 Is the proposed public offering of LIC's stake anything more than a political stance?

**Climate Change Is Uninsurable, So, What Should We Do?**

- 10 With climate change disasters being uninsurable, the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage can be a possible solution.  
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**Curbing Stubble Burning: Examining Possible Policy Interventions**

- 11 The root cause of stubble burning and the lapses on the part of the central and state governments in controlling it are examined. — *Devinder Sharma*

**Rainwater Harvesting Benchmarks**

- 14 Carefully designed rainwater harvesting systems can reduce water stress and help in the management of water crises in major South Asian cities, home to about a quarter of a billion people. — *Achintya Ray*

**Between Adhyatmik and Political Hindutva**

- 17 Notwithstanding the inclusive character of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi's articulation of "Adhyatmik Hindutva," its electoral feasibility and social desirability remain questionable. — *P Manikanta*

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- 25 The combination of CAA with NPR-NRC would produce consequences that are detrimental to the stable and harmonious functioning of our society and policy.  
— *Mihir Desai*

**Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana: A Critical Analysis**

- 31 Analysing the available data, the performance of the PMMY against its objectives is assessed, and it is observed that the PMMY has not altered secular trends in lending to the target segments. — *Deepti George*

**Undertrial Prisoners in Bihar: A Study of Liquor Ban Arrests**

- 38 Following the liquor ban in Bihar in 2016, many people from Dalit and Adivasi backgrounds who were arrested have been behind bars under exaggerated charges or because of procedural lapses by visiting legal aid lawyers.  
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**FDI Spillovers on Technical Efficiency of Manufacturing Firms**

- 42 Using stochastic frontier analysis, the impact of foreign direct investment on technical efficiency of Indian manufacturing firms during two sub-periods, 1994-2001 and 2002-10, is investigated. — *Manoj Pant, Sanghita Mondal*

**Muslim League in Kerala: Exploring the Question of 'Being Secular'**

- 50 The political trajectory of the Indian Union Muslim League in Kerala displays a unique engagement of religion-based political mobilisation of Muslims with secular-democratic politics in India. — *R Santhosh, M S Visakh*

**Ranbaxy Was Never the Exception**

- 58 A response to some of the criticisms in Anant Phadke's review of Katherine Eban's *Bottle of Lies: Ranbaxy and the Dark Side of Indian Pharma*, "Indian Pharma Fraud and Beyond" (*EPW*, 18 January 2020). — *Dinesh Thakur*

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- Twenty-five Years of the NFHS
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## India in 2047

An exercise in envisioning India's future considers the trajectory that education and the intellectual culture are likely to traverse along the evolving social and political realities in the country. **page 29**

## National Medical Commission Bill

The introduction of an undefined new category of "community health providers" in the 2019 NMC Bill invites the apprehension that medical practice by unqualified personnel may get legitimised. **page 13**

## A New Political Era

The protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens have brought a new political idiom into circulation, espousing values of the Constitution, humanism, and non-sectarian politics. **page 16**

**An Epistemic Change? Reading the CAA–NRC Protests**

10 An analysis of how the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act and the National Register of Citizens points to the epistemic change in the political idiom in India. — *G N Devy*

**Addressing Primary Healthcare Deficiencies**

13 The National Medical Commission Bill, 2019 has neither given an unambiguous definition of community health workers nor spelt out how they could be effectively utilised for primary healthcare. — *Sharmila Mary Joseph*

**Can Maharashtra's New Government Prioritise Gender Responsive Budgets?**

16 Major gender-related policies in Maharashtra are analysed, and the expectations from the new government in the state regarding provisions for women are outlined. — *Sujata Gothoskar, Seema Kulkarni*

**Chhapaak: Of Corrosive Mindsets and the Undying Will of the Survivors**

20 The newly released film *Chhapaak* is used as a vehicle to comment on acid attacks as a heinous act and how the survivors brave the brutalities meted out to them. — *Swati Sehgal*

**Envisioning the India of 2047**

29 The graduates of universities eventually fit, by and large, into social positions as solid citizens, in spite of the deep uneasiness some of them may continue to have with the society. — *Shyam Menon*

**National Family Health Survey-4**

Seven articles use data from the National Family Health Survey to critically assessed issues related to health, fertility and social progress.

**Quality of Data in NFHS-4 Compared to Earlier Rounds**

40 The quality of data from the National Family Health Survey-4 is likely to be affected by overstretching of the number of questions administered and the increased involvement of commercial agencies. — *K Srinivasan, Rakesh Mishra*

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# Mainstream

Founded by Nikhil Chakravartty

VOL LVIII No 11

New Delhi

15/3/20



**The BJP Has Wilfully Let Delhi Burn**

D. RAJA

**We the People of India and Visit of Trump**

L.K. SHARMA

**That was the Decade that was!**

SARDAR AMJAD ALI

**"...Mukt Bharat"**

NAVNEET SHARMA, ANAMICA

**In Lieu of Five Acres:**

**Being a Muslim in India**

M.K. BHADRAKUMAR

**Socialism rises like a Phoenix to haunt America**

ARUP MAHARATNA

**The Murder of Imagination**

**FROM N.C.'S WRITINGS**

**THE LITMUS TEST**

# The BJP Has Wilfully Let Delhi Burn

The following is the editorial that appeared in *The Wire* (February 26, 2020). We are using it here in lieu of an editorial with due acknowledgement.

For three days, northeast Delhi has been in the grip of armed vigilantes mobilised by *Hindutva* politicians to attack and terrorise those protesting the Citizenship (Amendment) Act. Given the nature of the mobs and their leaders, the violence quickly lost any pretence of a 'political' motive and descended into crude, generalised communal violence against Muslims.

The utter chaos and lawlessness which reigned unchecked on the watch of the Narendra Modi Government at the Centre—which controls law and order in the national Capital—has left at least 21 people dead (the figure has now risen to 38), including

a policeman, and several hundred injured. Ordinary working people—both Hindus and Muslims—have died in the orchestrated mayhem.

There can be no doubt that the ultimatum issued by Bharatiya Janata Party leader Kapil Mishra on Sunday (February 23) for the anti-CAA protestors to clear the streets of northeast Delhi or face dire consequences was the immediate trigger to the violence. But there are also deeper underlying factors—institutional and political—which helped push Delhi into the abyss.

The first and most obvious factor is the partisanship of the Delhi Police, encouraged and sustained in large part by the support of the ruling BJP at the Centre. From university campuses to the streets, it is now a matter of habit for the Delhi Police to stand by and watch mobs whose political agenda squares with the BJP run amok.

Ordinary citizens, particularly Muslims—the primary targets of the ruling party's polarising politics around the question of citizenship—can expect no succour from such partisan law enforcers. As in other recent episodes of violence in Delhi, here too, instead of protecting the vulnerable, the police could be seen backing the *Hindutva* mobs in their attacks on Muslims. The fact that the Delhi High Court's intervention was needed before the police agreed to ferry victims of the violence to safety tells its own appalling story.

The continued dereliction of duty without fear of punitive action has created a situation that is alarming for any civilised nation. The images flooding television screens for the past few nights, along with reports by journalists from numerous organisations who had all been subject to the mob's vicious attacks, brought back stark memories of 1984—the last time Delhi was in the throes of such organised communal violence—or 2002, when the State of Gujarat under Narendra Modi burned for weeks.

Second, the role of the BJP and *Sangh Parivar* leaders throughout this period has been reprehensible. Apart from Kapil Mishra, party legislators and functionaries have either openly incited anti-Muslim hatred or helped demonise the anti-CAA protests—which have all been peaceful—as anti-national. While Union Home Minister Amit Shah has been missing in action, the junior Home Minister has now set his

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Postal REGD. No. DL(S)-01/3139/2018-20

# Mainstream

Founded by Nikhil Chakravartty

VOL LVIII No 10

New Delhi

February 22, 2020

## Perspective from Shaheen Bagh

L.K. SHARMA

Please, Sir, I Want Some More

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Putin's Bombshell:  
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**FROM N.C.'S WRITINGS**  
**REFLECTIONS ON OUR TIME**

# Perspective from Shaheen Bagh

As we go to press today, the situation at Delhi's Shaheen Bagh remains extremely fluid. The country's Apex Court had sent interlocutors to Shaheen Bagh to discuss with the protesters there and get their consent to allow traffic movement to distant places that had been blocked for 69 days, that is, since the Shaheen Bagh protest against the Citizens Amendment Act (CAA) and National Register of

Citizens (NRC) had begun. In fact this morning itself one of the roads supposed to have been blocked by the protesters had been opened for a brief period of 45 minutes with some of the protesters arguing that if this was possible why was the road not being permanently opened.

The situation is still hazy and one has not come across any words of wisdom from the leaders including the Union Home Minister (the architect of the CAA and NRC experiment, as per his public pronouncements to that effect) as to whether he sticks to his original statement in Parliament's both Houses or if he wants to modify it. Political analysts are convinced that the ruling party's stand has suffered a jolt following the Delhi Assembly election result that have seen the BJP routed by the incumbent AAP Government of Arvind Kejriwal, and that is why it is waiting for the appropriate time to attack the protesters as the BJP leaders had declared sometime ago. In fact, in reply to a specific question in that regard at the recently held Hindustan Times Leadership Summit, Amit Shah had repeated what he had said earlier—that there was no question of retreating from the government's original position of carrying out the CAA come what may.

Close observers of the national scene under the NDA-II Government are of the considered view that the Modi-Shah duo is determined to implement the CAA and there has been no change in its position on this issue. That, we all know, would be playing with fire. The Shaheen Bagh protesters are currently fighting with their backs to the wall as far as this issue is concerned. In this backdrop, the Opposition parties must unite to effectively combat and defeat the ruling party's nefarious designs. As was highlighted in these columns last week,

....the coming days will be trying times for those who are committed to defending democracy and secularism, who want communal amity and social unity, who want to keep India as a free and open society as it has always been. The need of the hour is the unity of the people, rather than the unity only of Opposition parties, to face the challenges ahead. It is only the rock-solid unity of the people and the coalescing of all anti-fascist forces into a single solid phalanx of resistance that can prevent a fascist takeover of the country.

This perspective should never being lost sight of. It is only people's unity, as witnessed so brilliantly at Shaheen Bagh, that can give a fitting rebuff to the authorities in power at the Centre.

February 21

S.C.

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All remittances to *Mainstream*.

Postal REGD. No. DL(S)-01/3139/2018-20

# Mainstream

Founded by Nikhil Chakravartty

VOL LVIII No 9

New Delhi

कालिन्दी महाविद्यालय पुस्तकालय  
February 15, 2020  
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## Delhi Elections: Defeat of Communal Fascism

RAVINDRA SHARMA

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**FROM N.C.'S WRITINGS**

**INSANITY ENTHRONED**

# Delhi Elections: Defeat of Communal Fascism

The BJP has been convincingly and comprehensively trounced by the Aam Admi Party in the Delhi State Assembly elections. But it is not just a thumping victory for Arvind Kejriwal and his party for the third time in a row for all the good work they have done in the past five years. It is also a total and outright rejection by the voters of Delhi of the politics of communalism, the politics of hate, the politics of targeting the Muslims as a community and the politics of whipping up mass fury against all those who are opposed to CAA, NRC and NPR and tarring them as Pakistani agents and *gaddars* or traitors.

One single fact will suffice to prove that it is not just free water supply, free electricity, free *mahalla* clinics and free bus rides for women commuters that landed the massive victory on Kejriwal's plate. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, from whose

mouth communal poison flows in an unending torrent and who "discovered" that the Shaheen Bagh protesters were being fed free *biryani* by Kejriwal, addressed election rallies in as many as a dozen constituencies in Delhi. In each and every constituency that he addressed, the BJP candidate had to kiss the dust. Indeed, Kejriwal should be grateful to the Yogi for contributing in some measure to his victory!

The question that next arises is whether the wash-out in Delhi elections will make the BJP change its electoral strategy. The BJP has been losing every State Assembly election: Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Punjab, Maharashtra, Jharkhand and now Delhi. The magic of Modi's oratory or the organising ability of Amit Shah does not work in Assembly elections. It is doubtful whether the duo will be able to lead their party to another victory in 2024.

Quite unlikely. First, communalism and religious fanaticism are in the DNA of the NDA. Second, unlike Kejriwal, Modi has little to show by way of achievement. Ever since he came to power in 2014, the national economy has been nose-diving and hurtling to a crash. Demand recession continues, affecting production, investment and savings. There is no indication of a sudden change in the situation. Nirmala Sitharaman is no financial wizard. Neither she nor the Prime Minister knows how to stop the steady decline in the economy and embark on the road to economic recovery.

In the circumstances, the only alternative left to the BJP and the *Sangh Parivar* is to do all that is necessary to distract the people's attention from the real issues that plague them. The BJP and the RSS have to intensify communal hatred, brand all critics as Pakistani agents and have recourse more and more to State coercion to crush protest movements like that in Shaheen Bagh. As the economic crisis deepens, the harsher will be their treatment of protesters and protest movements. One cannot rule out the possibility that if the BJP finds that the charisma of Modi and the *Chankaya niti* of Amit Shah will not be enough to win the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, they will try to delay the elections as long as possible. There is another possibility also. When the RSS finds that Modi and Shah have failed to deliver the goods, it may feel it necessary to change the top leadership of the BJP. At the moment this is a remote possibility but it cannot be ruled out altogether.

The Congress also owes an explanation. After the spectacular victory of Kejriwal, the Congress refrained

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