



THE HINDU

ANALYSIS

हिंदी में

THE FRIDAY - FEBRUARY 17, 2017 HINDU

By Prashant Mavani

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tried to do my very best each and
every day.**

Abraham Lincoln



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United front in Delhi

Disorder at the border

Enemy inside gates (HT)

Multilateralism post COVID-19

Maternal health matter

United front in Delhi

- Delhi is in the grip of the pandemic, and its **response** had been **chaotic** until recently.
- On **March 4**, there was just a **single case**.
- As of **June 16**, **44,688 positive cases** and **1,837 deaths** have been recorded.
- New-found spirit of **camaraderie** between the **Arvind Kejriwal-led** government of **Delhi** and the **BJP-led Centre**.
- Meanwhile, **complaints of denial of patient care, exploitative billing by private hospitals, and deliberate attempts to underreport cases and deaths** have surfaced.



- Community spread or not
- **Prediction:** expected to cross 5.5 lakh by July-end
- Delhi failed in **health infrastructure preparedness**
- A new **six-member advisory committee** of eminent experts has been constituted to advise the **Delhi Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)**.
- The **L-G** issued orders empowering government officials to **impose fines** ranging from **₹500 to ₹1,000** on those found violating norms related to COVID-19 prevention such as spitting in public among others, besides fresh measures to **ensure transparency** in the functioning of the city's medical facilities.

➤ Dr. S. Jaishankar to Wang Yi

- External Affairs Minister **Dr. S. Jaishankar** has conveyed to his Chinese counterpart **Wang Yi**, India's protest in strongest terms on **violent face-off** in Galwan on 15th of this month.
- Dr Jaishankar recalled that at the meeting of **senior Military Commanders** held on **6th June**, an agreement was reached on de-escalation and disengagement along the **Line of Actual Control**.
- Ground commanders were meeting regularly to implement this consensus throughout the last week.
- While there was some progress, the Chinese side sought to **erect a structure in Galwan valley** on **Indian side of the LAC**.
- While this became a **source of dispute**, the Chinese side took **pre-meditated and planned action** that was directly responsible for the resulting violence and casualties.

- It reflected an **intent to change the facts** on ground in violation of all agreements to not change the status quo.
- **Dr Jaishankar** stressed that this unprecedented development will have a **serious impact on the bilateral relationship**.
- He said the **need of the hour** was for the Chinese side to **reassess its actions and take corrective steps**.
- The two sides should scrupulously and sincerely implement the understanding that was reached by the Senior Commanders on 6th June.
- **Troops should strictly respect and observe the line of actual control and should not take any unilateral action to alter it.**

Disorder at the border

➤ India and China have entered **uncharted territory** on the **Line of Actual Control**.

➤ Battle casualties: 20 Indian soldiers

➤ First combat deaths since 1975.

➤ First such in the Galwan Valley since the 1962 war

➤ The brutality of the clashes, with **severe injuries** and **deaths** incurred despite the fact that **no shots were fired**, is all also unheard of thus far.

➤ The deaths occurred when the two armies had agreed to “**disengage**” and “**de-escalate**” the month-long stand-off, which makes the clashes particularly shocking.



- China now claims **sovereignty** over the **entire Galwan Valley**.
- In his talks with **S. Jaishankar**, Wang Yi appeared to countenance this new position, and even called on India to “**punish those responsible**” for crossing the LAC, prompting India to accuse China of attempting to “**alter**” the LAC with this “**premeditated and planned action**” by its forces.
- Meanwhile, reports that Chinese troops continue to be well entrenched in the **Fingers area** (Finger 4-8) or the ridges around **Pangong Tso (lake)** that **India has always patrolled**, and remain inside the LAC at Nakula Pass are worrying indicators of a **hardening Chinese position**.

- Prime Minister Modi's strong statement: “**befitting reply**” and of the sacrifices of the soldiers that “**would not go in vain**”.
- **Apprise the nation** of exactly what has occurred since late April along the LAC.
- The government must conduct a **full investigation** of the Galwan clash and put out clearer details of the lives lost.
- Both sides must also acknowledge that the situation is **precarious**, and that the recent days in particular have **undone** decades of painstakingly **negotiated confidence-building mechanisms**.

Enemy inside gates

- India requires nothing less than for **Chinese troops** to retreat from the **Galwan Valley** to the pre-April status quo ante.
- China needs to vacate the **Pangong Tso** Lake where its troops, in “**large numbers**” (to quote defence minister Rajnath Singh), have **ingressed 8 km from Finger 8** (where Chinese troops previously stopped) to **Finger 4** (where Indian troops previously stopped), and show no signs of “**disengaging**”.
- The government has been **economical** with the truth regarding the situation in this remote region.

- Chinese intrusion is likened to the infiltration that led to the **Kargil war of 1999** – and might be worse.
- The **Ladakh events** **prove that diplomacy**, no matter the **size of the country** we deal with or the **complexity of the issues**, is best firmly grounded on established **institutional processes**, and not on some nebulous and misguided notion of “**personal chemistry**”.
- Going forward, neither India nor China can afford an **escalation of hostility**.

Multilateralism post COVID-19

- Multilateralism has belied the **ability to update swiftly**
- The **COVID-19 outbreak** has placed all **international institutions** under a magnifying glass.
- By any measure, **most** have performed below par.
- Functioning of multilateral institutions, like much else, requires reform.
- The **United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)** in **Paris** and the **Human Rights Council** in **Geneva** have survived the departure of the U.S.



- The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (**UNIDO**) in Vienna continues despite the **withdrawal of the U.S. and many others**.
- The World Health Organization (**WHO**), notwithstanding its visible shortcomings, will survive U.S. threats.
- The reasons are simple. **Multilateral organisations serve desperately felt global needs of the vast membership.**
- The pandemic has reinforced the desire for **greater global cooperation** amongst most states.

- Chinese nationals head **four** **multilateral organisations**.
- It is also true that **Chinese nationals** have **failed in campaigns** to head **UNESCO** and the **World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)**.
- Despite contributing nearly **10% of the UN's budget**, Chinese nationals are not exactly overrepresented in terms of staff positions, unlike many other countries whose personnel occupy more than half of the percentage of their financial contribution.
- China contributes **14%** of the **peacekeeping budget**.

- Amidst this, **multilateral bodies** are populated by a plethora of **small and middle states** quietly working to restore equilibrium, when the balance tends to shift.
- Responses of states during the COVID-19 crisis point to more emphasis on **sovereign decision making than before.**
- Multilateral architecture places **premium on structures over functions, processes over substance.**
- It **slows down** change of any sort. The same processes that have stalled change in the past will militate against a takeover in the future.

- The **‘pluri-laterals’** and the emerging **‘mini-laterals’** each have their place in terms of international agenda setting, but **global norm-setting requires an inclusivity that they lack.**
- Being able to shape the discourse at an incipient stage is a good perch to be on.
- Issue-specific **‘coalitions of the willing’** are catalysts.
- Responses of states during the COVID-19 crisis point to more emphasis on sovereign decision making than before.
- Unlike in other realms where **quantum leaps** are common, in **multilateral diplomacy, incrementalism pays dividends.**

- To unseat a permanent member from the International Court of Justice took us **seven decades**.
- To get Masood Azhar designated as a terrorist took us a **decade**.
- We need to **patiently promote reforms** while building partnerships to avail opportunities which may arise for more fundamental change.
- We need to bide our time without hiding our intent.

Maternal health matters

- In a **shocking incident** earlier this month, a **pregnant woman died** in an **ambulance** in **Noida** after being turned away from a number of private and government hospitals. This raises a chilling question for all of us: if this can happen somewhere so **close to the nation's capital**, what is happening in the corners of the country?
- A **second question** that comes to mind is: when the lockdown was suddenly announced and then extended, what exactly was the plan for the **millions of women** who were/are due for childbirth?



- Over the last **15 years**, the state has been promising maternal well-being to pregnant women provided they turn up at public hospitals during labour, and has been providing a cash incentive to those that have institutional birth.
- The recent news has been providing many glimpses of the **stigma and paranoia** regarding the virus and its fallout upon pregnant women and infants.
- In these **12 weeks**, the **approximately 9,00,000 pregnant women** (15% of the six million women giving birth) who needed critical care had to face enormous hurdles to actually obtain treatment at an appropriate hospital.

- Added to this were the women who have had miscarriages or sought abortions: that would be another **45,000 women** every single day.
- 80% doctors and 64% beds are in the **private sector**
- India's **Maternal Mortality Ratio** came down to **122 deaths per 1,00,000 live births** (SRS 2017), from 167 per 1,00,000 births in 2011-13.
- Much **effort** and **investment** over many years have led to this decrease.
- As India struggles to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, the hard-won gains of the last 15 years can be erased with one stroke.

➤ Prime Minister Narendra Modi

- The martyrdom of Indian Soldiers who died fighting in the violent clash in the Galwan Valley in Eastern Ladakh will not go in vain.
- "भारत माता के वीर सपूतों ने गलवान वैली में हमारी मातृभूमि की रक्षा करते हुये सर्वोच्च बलिदान दिया है। मैं देश की सेवा में उनके इस महान बलिदान के लिए उन्हें नमन करता हूँ, उन्हें कृतज्ञतापूर्वक श्रद्धांजलि देता हूँ। दुःख की इस कठिन घड़ी में हमारे इन शहीदों के परिजनों के प्रति मैं अपनी समवेदनाएं व्यक्त करता हूँ।"
- India will give a befitting reply to anyone who tries to impunge upon its sovereignty and integrity.
- "हमारे लिए भारत की अखंडता और संप्रभुता सर्वोच्च है, और इसकी रक्षा करने से हमें कोई भी नहीं रोक सकता। इस बारे में किसी को भी जरा भी भ्रम या संदेह नहीं होना चाहिए। भारत शांति चाहता है। लेकिन भारत को उकसाने पर हर हाल में यथोचित जवाब देने में सक्षम है।"
- The Prime Minister and the participating Chief Ministers stood up and observed two minute silence remembering the martyrs of Galwan Valley.

- Vice President Venkaiah Naidu paid homage to the soldiers of the Indian Army who were martyred in Ladakh.
- Home Minister Amir Shah has expressed pain at losing brave soldiers while protecting motherland at Ladakh's Galwan Valley.
- Army Chief General MM Naravane today said all ranks of the Indian Army salute the supreme sacrifice of valiant soldiers at Galwan.

➤ Chinese Casualties

- According to agency reports, the Chinese side suffered over 40 casualties including the dead and seriously injured in the face-off in the Galwan valley on Monday night.
- United States Intelligence Reports also suggest that, the Chinese Army suffered heavy casualties during the violent clash with the Indian military in eastern Ladakh's Galwan Valley.
- The report further added that this figure could be a combination of total number of soldiers killed and seriously wounded on the Chinese side.

➤ Ladakh Border Situation

- Defence Minister Rajnath Singh reviewed the Ladakh Border situation in a meeting held at South Block in New Delhi today.
- The meeting was attended by Chief of Defence Staff General Bipin Rawat, Chief of Army Staff General M M Naravane, Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Karambir Singh and Chief of Air Staff Air Chief Marshal R K S Bhadauria.

➤ Second World War

- India will send a 75-member Tri-Service contingent to participate in the military parade in Moscow on the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the victory in the Second World War.
- The parade will honour the heroism and sacrifices made by the Russian and other friendly people.
- Defence Minister of Russia had invited an Indian contingent to take part in the Victory Day Parade scheduled to be held on 24th of this month.
- The participation will be a mark of tribute and solidarity with the people of Russia at a time when they remember their heroes of the Great Patriotic War.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi had written to Russian President Vladimir Putin a congratulatory message on the occasion of the Victory Day on 9th May.

➤ United Nations Security Council

- UNSC will elect five new non-permanent members to the council.
- France took over the Presidency of the powerful 15-member Security Council for the month of June.
- The United Nations General Assembly last month adopted a decision to hold the Security Council Elections under new voting arrangements taking into account restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- India is the sole candidate for a non-permanent seat from the Asia-Pacific category for the 2021-22 term.
- Its victory is given since it is the sole candidate vying for the lone seat from the grouping.
- New Delhi's candidature was unanimously endorsed by the 55-member Asia-Pacific grouping, including China and Pakistan, in June last year.
- Beginning in January 2021, the new members will serve a two-year term on the UNSC.

➤Wheat Procurement

- Government today said that the procurement of wheat from farmers has touched an all-time record to 382 Lakh tonnes.
- The earlier record was 381.48 lakh tonnes, achieved during 2012-13.
- Consumers Affairs, Food and public distribution Ministry said that the commencement of procurement was delayed by a fortnight due to the first lockdown and was kicked off only from 15th April in most of the wheat surplus states.
- The Ministry said, extraordinary efforts have been made by state governments and all government procuring agencies led by Food Corporation of India to ensure that wheat is procured from farmers without any delay and in a safe manner.

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