



ECONOMIC POLICY



SOCIAL POLICY



REGIONAL INTEGRATION



GOVERNANCE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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NEWSLETTER FOCUS:

- ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN FIGHT OVER DISPUTED NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION
- FRANCE ATTACKS
- SAME INCIDENCE, DIFFERENT TYPE OF SHADES

MAJOR EVENT:

ATTACKS IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES: CAUSES AND EFFECT

ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN

FIGHT OVER DISPUTED

NAGORNO-KARABAKH REGION

A. CONDITIONS:

It has been four decades, since the two countries namely, Armenia and Azerbaijan have been having conflicts and battles over a piece of land situated in the mountainous region of south Caucasus. Occasional there are violent outbreaks reported between the two countries. The dispute over the land (Nagorno Karabakh) began in 1988 and has continued since then and it has caused massive violations related to human rights, refugee crisis and has also impacted the economies of both the Transcaucasian republics. Even now the war is ongoing.

As reported, dozens of deaths took place in the battle between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the last few weeks. The central issue of this conflict was a dispute related to the control of the mountainous region of Nagorno-Karabakh. During the conflict around thousands of people died. In addition to these a million others were forced to leave their homeland.

B. CAUSES:

History and ethnicity play the major role in the present conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh has had a history of being ruled by the varied ethnic communities in centuries. At present, the region consists of a majority Armenian Christian population. However, it is internationally recognized as a part of predominant Muslim Azerbaijan.

C. HISTORY:

Both the countries were a part of the Soviet Union (before it collapsed). After the collapse of the Communist empire, the new markings of the borders and boundaries have been a point of contention. During the autonomous legislature of the mountainous region, Nagorno Karabakh voted to join Armenia. After the dissolution of the Union, the region declared its independence but it was formally never recognized as an independent state. Though a major

part of the population are ethnic Armenians, the international community recognizes Nagorno-Karabakh as a part of Azerbaijan.

During the year 1988 (end of Soviet rule) Azerbaijani troops and Armenian secessionists had started their wars. The end result of this was that a truce was signed in 1994 wherein, Nagorno-Karabakh was held by the ethnic Armenians and thousands of ethnic Azerbaijanis had to leave their homes. Nagorno-Karabakh, although is a recognized part of Azerbaijan, but has been controlled by ethnic Armenians since a war ended in 1994. Thus, the hostilities have been on and off for nearly 30 years.

Armenian forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh region said that a military airport was struck in Azerbaijan's second-largest city on Sunday (4th October) in a major escalation of fighting between the former Soviet republics. The clashes have also increased worries about the security of pipelines in Azerbaijan that carry natural gas and oil to Europe. Moscow fears Islamist militants will enter Nagorno-Karabakh and use it as a base for which to enter Russia. The war has come at a moment of intense global distraction due to COVID-19, US elections, and Belarus protests. This is no coincidence. Armenians all over the world are aghast at the global silence at yet more violence against their community, while Azerbaijanis decry Western hypocrisy and neglect of their grievances.

D. COMMENTS:

While, Ilham Aliyev, Azeri President office reported about the missiles that hit Ganca came from neighboring Armenia, an allegation to which the Armenian Defense Ministry simply denied. Nine Azerbaijani civilians were killed in a missile strike on Azerbaijan's second city Ganja after the ceasefire; earlier that day two Armenian civilians were reported killed in an Azerbaijani operation in the town of Hadrut, Nagorno Karabakh.

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin spoke by phone with his Azeri counterpart, Ali Asadov, on Thursday to underline the importance of restarting peace talks and establishing a ceasefire, Russian news agencies reported, citing the government. Canada has urged Turkey and other nations to stay out of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, according to Foreign Minister Francois-Philippe Champagne. The top Canadian official pushed his Turkish counterpart to help de-escalate tensions in the area by encouraging close ally Azerbaijan to take part in peace talks, Reuters reported. "The position of the United States has been clear and has not changed: Both sides must cease hostilities immediately and work with the Minsk

Group Co-Chairs to return to substantive negotiations as soon as possible,” a U.S. spokesman said.

E. ALLIES:

Armenia has accused Turkey for providing Azerbaijan with military support. A significant new feature of this round of violence is Turkey’s more active involvement. Turkey has shifted from moral support to Azerbaijan to active denunciation of mediation of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe’s Minsk Group, co-chaired by France, Russia and the United States. Although Turkey has clearly declared their support, Russia is playing from both the sides, it has kept its military bases in Armenia but is also side by side supporting Azerbaijan by calling a ceasefire. It is found that Russia maintaining allies with both Azerbaijan and Armenia is supplying weapons and arms to both the countries. Azerbaijan is also supported by Turkish, Israeli and Byelorussian equipment in its arsenal.

CONCLUSION:

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg called on Monday for a ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh as the death toll continued to rise from clashes in the breakaway enclave in the South Caucasus. Turkey, meanwhile, urged the alliance to call for the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the region, which belongs to Azerbaijan under international law but is populated and governed by ethnic Armenians.

This war between the two countries, Armenia and Azerbaijan has had one of the longest conflicts since 1988 continuing even today. It is estimated that Azerbaijan with a population of 10.5 million but adjacent Iran, which supports Armenia in the conflict there are about 15 Million Azeris. The Iranian regime worries the Azeris could be an internal threat. For European countries and Turkey, ensuring that the Ganja Gap is not threatened is also critical to their national security.

Even now, there are various arguments still put forward by both sides. Nagorno-Karabakh is now a de facto independent region that depends heavily on Armenian support. But it is not recognized by the UN. Thus, the dispute in the region remains one of post-Soviet Europe's "frozen conflicts”.

RECENT TERROR ATTACKS IN FRANCE

Over the past few weeks, terror incidents in France have heightened. Once again, tensions were sparked by the French satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo. The magazine republished a cartoon on Prophet Muhammed to mark the beginning of the trial of the perpetrators of the 2015 Paris terror attack whose primary victims were journalists at their office. The cartoons were offensive to some Muslims because they claim any visual representation of the Prophet is prohibited by Islam while others criticized it for equating the entire religion with terrorism.

An attack at their office in September 2020 in light of the trial was followed by a speech made by French President Emmanuel Macron which offended many Muslim leaders across the world. Macron expressed concerns over Islamic separatism in France, argued for a “French version of Islam” that is in congruence with French principles of secularism- “laicite” which calls for a complete separation of religion from public life and said that Islam is “in crisis all over the world”. What followed in the coming week was more violence. A school teacher who displayed the Charlie Hebdo cartoon to advocate for freedom of speech and expression was beheaded by a Chechen-origin man. Following this, on 29th October 2020, three separate acts of extremist violence took place- a knife attack killed three and injured a few more in Nice, another attacker was disarmed by the police in time in Avignon and the guard at the French consulate in Saudi Arabia was attacked by a Saudi national. On the other hand, following these events, two hijab-clad Muslim women in Paris were stabbed by two French women and various critics accused the French media on staying silent on this side of the issue.

The sharpest international response against France came from Turkey. Erdogan condemned France and as a result they recalled their ambassador. This was followed by a call for boycott of French goods in various West Asian countries including Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE and protests spread in many others. Jordan and Pakistan condemned the French ambassadors of their respective countries. The former Malaysian premier Mahathir Mohamad commented that freedom of speech should not offend another’s faith; however certain parts of his speech legitimized violence and were taken down by twitter on the request of French officials. On the other hand, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi became the first non-Western world leader to come out in support of France.

It becomes important to place these events in the context of the domestic politics of France. Macron is to face elections in 2022 and his biggest electoral competitor is the far-right. Hence, his firm stance on tackling the menace of Islamic extremism can be expected to be partly geared towards appealing to the right-wing voters in the country. Ultimately, it is believed that diplomacy ends when violence begins. Admittedly, the line between the right to freedom of speech and expression and hate speech is a precarious one and extremely subjective. Nevertheless, violence can never be the response and must always be condemned.

Is violence the only way to showcase pride and stand for your beliefs? Can taking lives of people who choose to express their opinion be the solution? No religion promotes violence. In the name of religion, people are killed all across the world. Respect for all faiths must be maintained and stringent actions should be taken against those who spread hate against any religion. But when it comes to freedom of expression and speech, shutting someone down by performing bloodthirsty killing is not an answer. To understand a religion and its culture and also offer equal respect in a peaceful manner should be followed by all communities. Human rights, being basic and legal, are offered to each citizen of the world and should thus be respected on humanitarian grounds.

“Freedom of Expression is the foundation of human rights, source of humanity and the mother of all truth.”

- Lin Xiaobo

(Chinese writer and Nobel Peace Prize winner)

SAME INCIDENCE,

DIFFERENT TYPE OF SHADES

INTRODUCTION

Crime is one of the phenomena which exist in society from its inception. The frequency and number also, tell us about the maturity and development stage of society. In India, the increasing number of crimes are due to many reasons like the inadequate number of police, absence of fair enquiry, lack of respect of law and order, feudal approach, lack of education, colonial laws which fail to understand the new social realities.

In light of these factors, the crime against women and marginal groups keeps increasing. The government, after every incident, comes with new amendments in existing laws. These new laws are usually misused by those who are in better positions in society and the victims usually don't know about new arrangements.

The issue has been aggrieved when political parties add their political interest in the crime. There is no doubt that crime is increasing and our existing police and judiciary system are struggling to address it. But the selective outrage in some cases negatively impacts the social psyche. From the last few, there are cases which keep coming, and they all are against the women. Still, the political parties usually choose those cases which suits them politically or close to their political narrative.

This selective approach neither helps the victim nor makes any addition to the efforts of the police system. The political parties and their leader snatch all the attention of their political tour, and the issue victim goes backstage. There are many cases which we visualise through a political leader rather than issue or victim that is one of the travesties of current political discourse.

The media is not innocent in this case; they are also working as political parties and choose the side as per the ideology or for profit. The media is working more like a political party than an agency which has the responsibility to bring truth.

Recently we have witnessed that fake news and social media misinformation has caused a larger problem to the justice delay system of the country. The trend that is visible explains the misinformation campaign that runs by the individual and political mileage and vested image. During the political campaigns thus far, a lot of strategies are being tested and applied across a variety of platforms, and to various degrees of success.

Many of India's misinformation campaigns are developed and run by political parties with nationwide cybercrimes; they target not only political opponents but also religious minorities and dissenting individuals, with propaganda rooted in domestic divisions and prejudices. All of them always blame each other for the current scenario.

HATHRAS CASE

On 14 September 2020, a 19-year-old The Dalit girl was assaulted, allegedly by four upper-rank men in the Hathras region, Uttar Pradesh, India. After fighting for her life for two weeks, she died in a Delhi hospital.

At first, it was accounted for as an endeavour to murder, however later in her statement, the victim named four accused as having raped her. The victim's brother claimed that no arrest was made in the initial 10 days. After her demise, the victim was forcibly incinerated by the police without the consent of her family, a case denied by the police.

The case has gotten far and wide media consideration and judgment from all over the nation and protest against the administration began. For right around 10 days, the police said that it wasn't an assault case and through different web-based media channels counterfeit news flowed. Presently, at long last after about a month of this occurrence, a CBI team is on this case and the cops who made these unfounded incriminations are being suspended. Yet at the same time justice is awaited for the little youngster.

RAHUL MURDER CASE

On 7 October 2020, a 19-year-old Rahul, studying BA English Honours from Delhi University (DU) School of Open Learning (SOS), was killed having a relationship with a Muslim girl by her brother and relatives in the Adarsh Nagar, New Delhi, India.

They have beaten Rahul heavily with kicks, punches ruthlessly due to which his intestine was ruptured and he died late night during treatment in hospital, Delhi. Police filed the case of two

families in connection with the love affair with Muslim community girl in which victim Rahul died and five accused have been arrested in this case.

Politics has intensified after the murder of Rahul, on the other hand, the Delhi Police has also issued a statement urging them not to communalise the matter communally. They appealed that no further stand should be taken in the matter, thereby disturbing the peace system in the area. They said that it should not spread any false information or confusion about it.

ANJANA TIWARI CASE

On 13th October, a 35-years old woman attempted to self-immolate in front of Vidhan Sabha in Uttar Pradesh. When people around her saw her burning, they rushed to her help. She was admitted to the hospital for treatment, her condition is critical.

Aisha, previously Anjana was married to Akhilesh Tiwari in Maharaja Ganj. She got divorced, after which she fell in love with Asif and got married to him after accepting Islam. Soon after the marriage, Asif left for Saudi Arabia. After which she was facing domestic violence and harassment from in-laws. She had tried to lodge a complaint against them in Maharaja Ganj police station but no action should be taken by the police and she wanted to meet the CM.

The women had met the Congress leader some days before and he had advised her to self-immolate, also promising to bring the media when she does it. Patel and the AIMIM leader were arrested for abetment of suicide. Earlier in July, another Congress leader named Anoop Patel, along with an AIMIM leader Kadir Khan was arrested for provoking a mother-daughter duo to self-immolate in front of the Vidhan Sabha.

AJMER CASE

On 29 September 2020, days after a 19-year-old girl from Hathras was raped by four upper-caste men, another incident came to light from Ajmer, Rajasthan. A Dalit woman was assaulted by three men on Tuesday at a village in Ajmer. The woman, who is married, approached the police on Wednesday and lodged a complaint.

The woman had gone to meet her mother as the latter was sick. The woman was on her way to Daurai village when a man identified as Teepu approached her. Teepu allegedly dragged the woman to a nearby field and raped her. After raping the woman, Teepu called two of his friends to the spot who allegedly raped her.

The three men held the married Dalit woman hostage for hours and dropped her on a nearby road before fleeing from the spot. The aggrieved woman went to her mother's home where she narrated her ordeal. Following this, the woman went to the police station with her mother and lodged a case.

RAJNANDGAON & KANAGAON (CHHATTISGARH)

On 19 July 2020, a 17 years old girl was sexually assaulted by two boys along with five others the night after which she committed suicide in Kanagaon village, Chhattisgarh. The police assured that they would lodge a case, but no further action was taken.

On 12 September 2020, a 16 years old tribal girl was sexually assaulted by three boys in Rajnandgaon, Chhattisgarh. It came to light when police learned about it and convinced the survivor's family to lodge a complaint even as the village heads opposed police intervention and tried to sort out the matter at the panchayat level.

NIKITA TOMAR MURDER

A college-going student has been killed in daylight. Tauseef who studied with her in school was shot in her head while she was returning from the college. She has refused the marriage proposal of Tauseef. The mother of the girl has alleged that there was constant pressure on her from the Tauseef family for the conversion. People accused media that it only covers one kind of hatred and discrimination, it refuses to acknowledge the victim when she/he belongs to the majority.

CONCLUSION

Politics use people and their resources in acquiring power and deprive them of social and cultural activities. Politics have one common goal: that is to acquire political power and use it to fulfil their aims. However, to achieve this object, their methods are different. Politics uses intrigue, diplomacy, and makes an attempt to win public opinion democratically. Politics, on the contrary, bereft of any value, directs its policy on the needs and requirements of society whereupon, it obliges to change laws and system of government accordingly.

Before Hathras some cases have surfaced in the state of Rajasthan and Chhattisgarh. Still, no politicians have visited there nor have they released any statement on that issue as those cases were not as per their political interest. The issue is that law and order is really a concern for

the state and political parties, but they choose and talk about it when it suits their political and election agenda.

The brutal murder of Rahul in Delhi was shocking; Rahul has been killed for having a relationship with a Muslim girl. This kind of incident was shocking, but most political parties were mum on this issue.

The Ajmer rape case did not get any mention as there was no election soon. The media and political parties keep ignoring the crimes where the election is not scheduled shortly, but they keep digging where the election is scheduled.

The one more aspect has been observed in recent crime reporting of some issues; the media usually take the name of the accused if she/he belongs to the majority, but they keep silent when it is not the case. This kind of attitude is very unprofessional, and it restricts the truth to the masses.

Because one kind of news always gets limelight and the 2nd kind of the news is always being ignored, this makes people think that one community is responsible for most of the crime and the other community is wrongfully accused. In the absence of credible news coverage, no proper psychological study is possible, and we only have one kind of literature available.

The above incidents have sent shockwaves across the country. While the investigation of the incident is yet to be completed, widespread protests have swept the country in the aftermath of the death of the victims, with people demanding exemplary action to be taken against the perpetrators.

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AUTHORS:

Ms. Grace Shaurya Sharma, Ms. Jessica Sahota, Ms. Aakanksha Chauhan,
Ms. Arushi Srivastava, and Mr. Jai Shankar Sah

Mr. Ramanand

The Centre of Policy Research and Governance (CPRG), India strongly believes that in the 21st century an India deprived of gainful opportunities, necessary for the flourishing of a young and emergent India, will prove to be an impediment in the development of human capital and preservation of global security. CPRG thus works towards providing gainful opportunities in an effort to promote the involvement of young people in policy making and politics.



9930912114



cprgindia@gmail.com



cprgindia



<https://www.facebook.com/CPRGIndia/>



CPRGIndia



A-3, Dhawan Deep
Building, 6-Jantar Mantar
Road, Janpath,
New Delhi - 110001