

THE FOURTH ESTATE

SBSMUN 2016

“

I wouldn't like
to comment on
my affiliation
with the
Al-Qaeda.

”

- Robert M. Gates
Ex-Director, CIA
George H.W. Bush
Cabinet

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Plagiarism Plagues the UN General Assembly

Naina Atri and Tanvi Jhunjhunwala investigate the case of the copied resolution in UNGA



So, how are you feeling?

Chair: Umm..good?

The second day of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) with agenda revolving around Bio-Terrorism was, to say the least, interesting. As far as technicalities go, they were clearly lacking. However, the Executive Board was an understanding and incredibly patient one.

Observing the delegates made it easy for us to choose those we wanted to interview because a majority of them were quite silent. We decided to interview the Chairperson of the committee, Ishan Tewari. Patient yet subtly savage, he tried to steer the committee towards an appropriate direction.

When asked about his expectations, he simply mentioned that he expected a larger committee but perhaps fewer numbers gave delegates more chances to speak. However, his comparison between the two sessions that happened was more detailed. His expectations had risen yesterday and he woke up optimistic, but today's session had dampened his hope.

Now comes the most interesting aspect of today's session. A few countries, with France, USA, and UK in the forefront created a working paper.

After a short discussion upon the working paper, the Executive Board discovered that a majority of the paper was lifted from the Internet. Annoyed, they were forced to scrap off the paper which caused a setback to the development of the debate as a new one was to be created.

When we approached the Delegate of France regarding this matter, he remained neutral, and did not blame any single person. However, he termed the Working Paper as a 'resolution that was not expected out of a MUN conference.'

The delegate of United States of America on the other hand, was not interested in being neutral at all. Voicing her expectations from the committee she said, "Of course I do expect some award, maybe a high recommendation or best delegate because according to me I've been doing really well, at least till the second day, I don't know about the third day."

Washing her hands of the embarrassing situation, she said, "The Delegate of France cut, copy and pasted [the working paper] but later it was proven that the delegate of Malaysia was responsible for all of that. I was completely away from this because my part [in this] was editing and collecting signatories. Since the Executive Board was very understanding and cooperative, they gave us another opportunity to rewrite the paper. This time I, myself, personally wrote all of this again."



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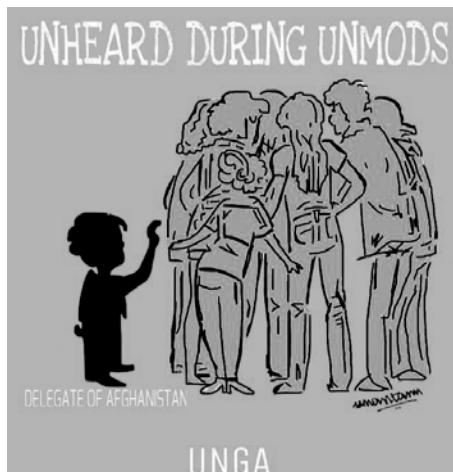


When asked about the plagiarism, Iran made it clear that she wasn't part of the paper. She smirked, saying, "I have no comments other than this is highly unexpected and derogatory to the MUN and not expected from such experienced and respected MUNers."

A First-Timer's Perspective

IP: What were your pre-conference expectations and were they met?

Ukraine: When the committee began, I was open-minded about it since this is my first encounter with a MUN and I didn't know what to expect. The experience till now has been amazing.



IP: Any views on the Executive Board you'd like to share?

Ukraine: Our executive board is really great; they're approachable and are trying their best to make us comfortable. They created a perfect balance between technical issues and helping first-timers.

IP: Any other comments?

Ukraine: I'd just like to say that MUNs are a great idea; you get to learn and interact with new people. You get to widen your perspective, and it's the perfect platform for the youth to express their opinions.

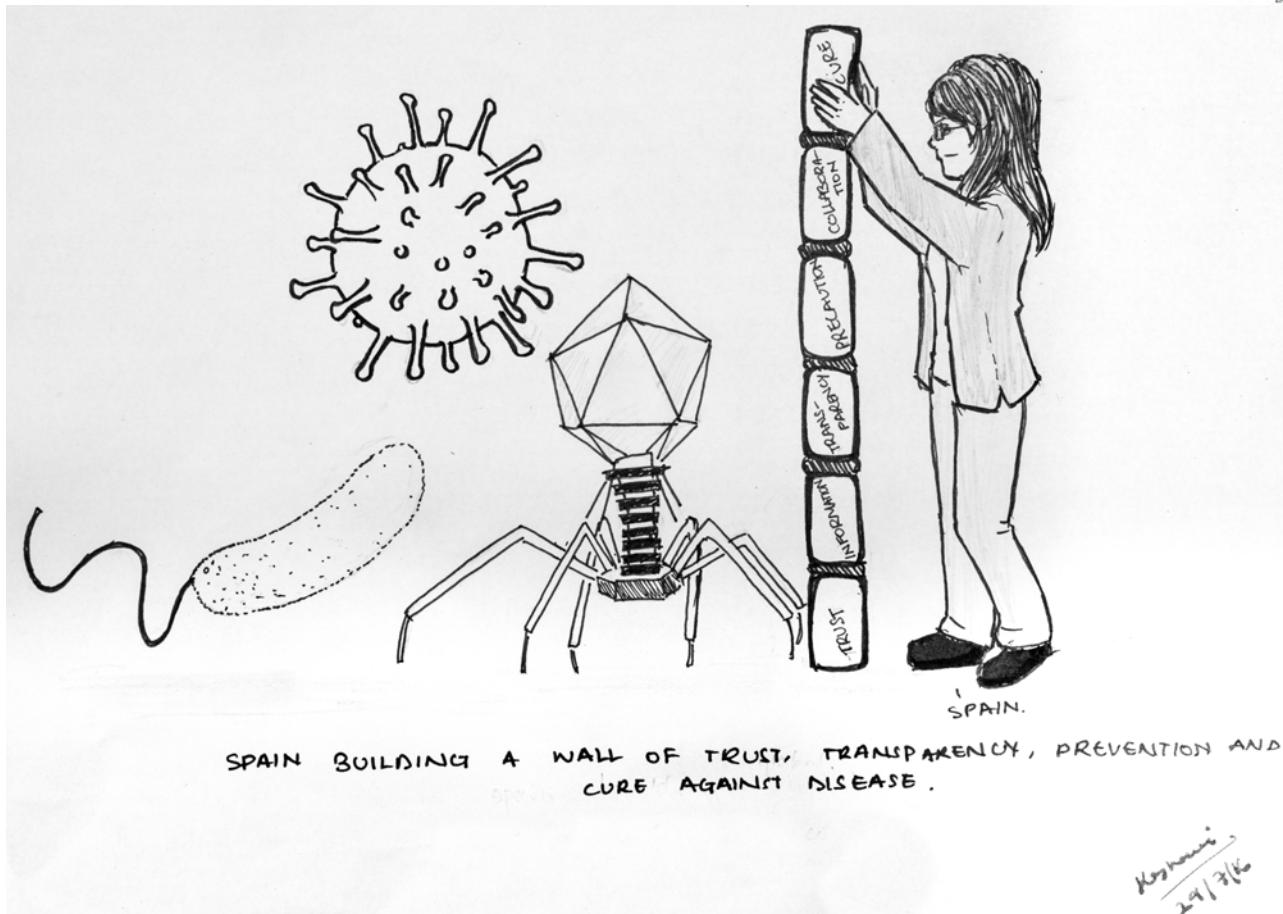
Unlike yesterday's assumptions, the Executive Board is clearly not as disinterested as some delegates might have hoped for.



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SPAIN BUILDING A WALL OF TRUST, TRANSPARENCY, PREVENTION AND CURE AGAINST DISEASE.

Kosmin
29/3/16



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UN Security Council, Confused?

Ananya Kaushik and Simran Singh try to get to the bottom of the (in)decisive Security Council dealing with a Crisis Situation.



The Security Council was dealing with one of the most important issues in today's times- Developing an emergency Response Mechanism for International Health Regulations. One would expect some real decisions, however, that was not what we got.

Dealing with the crisis

On the 29th of July, Hangzhou City's residents were stricken with a disease, which caused fever, muscular pains and blood spots on the upper body. The next day, the disease was identified as Bolivian Haemorrhage Virus, which had a mortality rate of 30% in earlier cases and had already killed just fewer than ten people in Hangzhou.

Committee's lack of interest prompts EB to ask delegates "what's wrong?"

Considering all of this, one would expect immediate action from the Security Council, the most powerful body of the UN. The delegates, however, had a different idea. After submitting one subpar and vague directive, they felt that their work was done. They simply repeated the same solutions (if one could call them that) over and over. The executive board clearly could not have handled hearing the same sentence one more time, as they soon suggested that the committee return to discussing the agenda.

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“Delegates, what’s wrong?”

Though the committee was the Security Council of the United Nations, they surely weren’t acting the part. The indecisiveness of the delegates was glaringly obvious since they could barely take a concrete decision in the light of the crisis.

The delegates were constantly asked about why their ‘energy levels were so low’ or why they were so ‘dead’- hesitating to speak every time they were asked to, and reluctant to even send in a Point of Order during others’ speeches even though it was obvious that the delegates weren’t sure about the facts that they were stating, are just a few pieces of evidence of their lack of enthusiasm.

After all the silence, the committee erupted into a heated discussion about Indian Politics during the formal debate; while discussing the incompetence of Mr. Modi, the Rapporteur incessantly defended the esteemed Prime Minister. The President kept on emphasising the greatest downfalls of the Prime Minister like the infamous Gujarat riots while the Rapporteur tried his hardest to apply logic and justify his actions even though possibly the entire committee had other opinions.

Even though the discussion brought life back into committee, their enthusiasm was quickly lost. This goes to question that had this been a real life United Nations Security Council Conference, what would have been the implications of such lack of interest among the representatives of the some of the most powerful countries in the world?



A SLOW FIRST HALF OF S.C.



The Executive Board’s Thoughts

The President of the Security Council, it turned out, did not come with preconceived notions. When questioned about the performance of the delegates, he said, “I’m quite pleased, I had absolutely no expectations, and so the fact that they have even read the background guide is enough for me.”

As for the committee’s response to the crisis, the entire Executive Board had the same response - *frustration*.

The Vice President shared her thoughts, saying, “Just as they were actually getting somewhere with the discussion, the tide completely changed and they started talking about language barriers!” The Rapporteur provided us with a very helpful visual to illustrate just how close they were; holding his fingers half and inch away from each other - “this close!”

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What does the Conference Staff feel?

While trying to understand the Committee a little better, our team of journalists sat down with the members of the Organising Committee present in the room with a few questions.

We tried to understand their feelings about the committee, getting responses ranging from 'nice and interesting discussions' to could have been a bit more interactive. Though they felt that considering it was a very small committee, they were doing well.

We asked them about their treatment by the delegates, which they responded as gracious and cooperating.



When the President asked the delegates about their countries' Presidents, many of them googled it!



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While Kuwait suffers, the George Bush Cabinet stands Divided

Imran Batra and Sakshi Singhal interview the Attorney General and the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency to decipher the divide in the Cabinet.



As George H.W. Bush's Cabinet discussed how to repel the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, two different points of view emerged. One felt that a full-on war was the answer to driving Iraqi forces out of Kuwait. The other had a more humanitarian and peaceful take on the matter. We interviewed Dick Thornburgh, the US Attorney General, and Robert M. Gates, the Director of the CIA, to show the contrast between these two opinions.

IP: *The motion has been raised to drop bombs on parts of Iraq multiple times. What is your opinion on the matter?*

Attorney General: "The motion to drop bombs on Iraqi cities has been brought up many times. However it is not as simple as it seems. The areas chosen to attack have civilian population that has not been evacuated. US policies state that the government must take all possible measures to evacuate the civilians from the area before choosing an area to target bomb. Therefore I feel like the motion is valid for an aerial bomb attack. However civilians' lives should be taken into consideration."

Director of CIA: "When we talk of dropping bombs on multiple parts of Iraq, there can be two possibilities. One can be civilian bombing and the other can be target

bombing. I am definitely against civilian bombing. However, I do feel that target bombing is okay, and it is politically correct, as well as compliant with International Humanitarian Law."

IP: *There has been a constant mention of 'weapons of mass destruction' present in Iraq. Could you elaborate on what these weapons may be? Additionally, what are your reasons to believe so?*

Attorney General: "I do not believe there are weapons of mass destruction in Iraq currently. However there is lots of suspicion surrounding the topic, but since there has not been any official statements or press releases, I do not believe Iraq possesses any biological, chemical or nuclear warfare that is illegal."

Director of CIA: "Elaborating on the weapons of mass destruction, they do not include only nuclear weapons; they also include biological and chemical weapons. These weapons, obviously, kill many people, and are hence known as weapons of mass destruction. We believe that Iraq has these weapons as it isn't a stable country and is ruled by Saddam Hussein, who is very a dangerous man. Hence, we have every right to believe this."

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IP: Do you believe that the move to Defence Readiness Condition 2 (DEFCON 2) is necessary?

Attorney General: "I feel like DEFCON 2 is the most apt stage for the US army right now. Higher stages like DEFCON 3,4, and 5 are not strict enough to take action against Iraq but again like I stated previously, DEFCON 1 is not in order as it is nuclear war and we cannot go into that because of The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons."

Director of CIA: "It is very much necessary. I mean, throughout committee, I've been trying to pass the motion to move to DEFCON 1, as weapons of mass destruction may be involved in this case. However, DEFCON 2 is obviously the most necessary thing we can do right now."

IP: How do you believe declaring war on Iraq will help drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait?

Attorney General: "The declaration of war on Iraq and repelling Iraq from Kuwait are two separate issues that are often mixed up by people. Iraq made direct actions of war against us, which is why we will rebuttal. However the mission in Kuwait is still a world objective and supported by the UN. They will not

intertwine but they may result in the success of one another."

Director of CIA: "We cannot move into Kuwait just like that, right. Because of that, we need to have a motion for the declaration of war. Having such a motion will enable us to focus US, UN, and NATO forces into liberating Kuwait. Hence, this will drive Iraqi forces out of Kuwait really quickly."

The differences between these opinions were quite evident during committee hours. A great example of this was the declaration of war. While the Attorney General saw the declaration as a rebuttal to Iraq's actions, the Director of the CIA believed that the war and the repulsion of Iraqi forces were one and the same thing. Similarly, while the Director of the CIA believed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction because of its political instability and "dangerous" leader, the Attorney General wasn't convinced due to the lack of reliable resources.

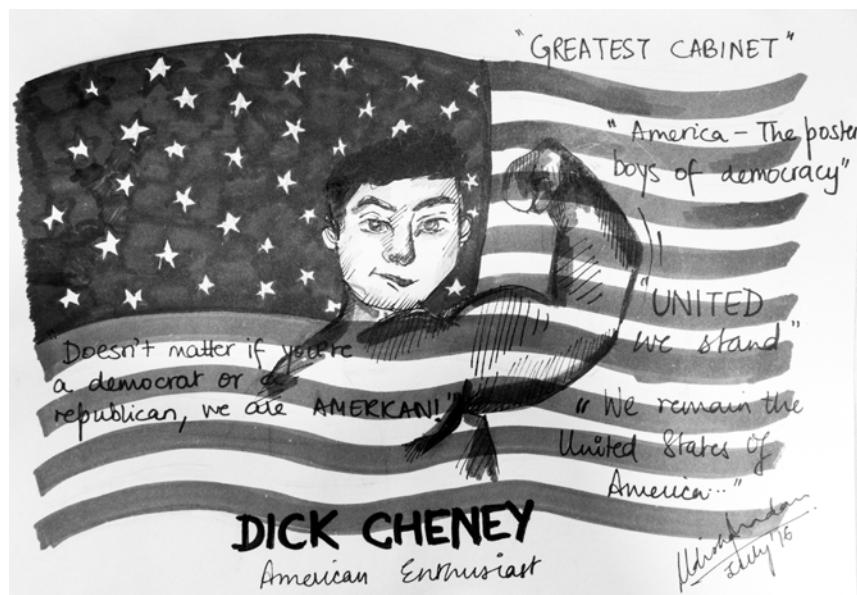
These two points of view, however, didn't prevent the committee from moving forward. Due to the Attorney General's passive point of view being that of a minority, the second session ended with the members of the committee deciding where to deploy the armed forces.



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UNESCO - This Coin has Two Sides

Sashrika Pathak and Ishani Singhal dig deeper into the matter of this ‘unconventional’ committee, delicately treading the line between an expected MUN simulation and a healthy learning environment.



“We are not wrong, we are just unconventional”

It is disheartening to note the informal attitude the committee possessed for their assigned agenda: “Preservation of symbols of cultural heritage in the Middle East, with special emphasis on ISIL’s activities in Mosul and Palmyra”. To talk about the preservation of world heritage sites is to decide the fate of the global cultural pride. Many observers, including the International Press, felt that the agency is distracted from their aim of reaching a conclusion.

Amongst embarrassed laughs and confusion, the proceedings of the committee unfortunately get delayed. While some might call the debates elaborate, many observers would agree that the stagnancy of the session instigated boredom.

Dismissing subtle hints given by EB as well as the IP in the feedback sessions, the delegates retorted by talking about the importance of discussing the minute causes of the agenda. Discussions in UNESCO conventionally aim to unravel the unfamiliar and not just collaboratively dwell in the past. While it is important to discuss the issue at hand, it is equally important to progress the discussion towards formulating the expected solution.



With the EB’s suggestion for a half an hour research time, it is hard to imagine the agency reaching the desired destination. While some delegates were well researched, most of them seemingly made it through this session on the basis on their ‘personal privileges’.

This year’s UNESCO was called the ‘intelligent committee’ with sharp sarcasm. Where the people demand a solution to their disturbing crisis, the committee prioritises feedback over discussion. Leading with informal outbursts and continuously suspending the prescribed rules of conduct, the executive board is unwilling to execute expected norms of an MUN.



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Delving a little deeper into the committee, much was different from what was thought.

"It's BORING", was the first reply of every member present in the committee when asked about their opinions on the progression of the same. This included not only the OC members, IP team, but also the delegates. Though some delegates felt passionately about the same, no one decided to use their power and steer it in a different, interesting direction. It is hypocritical to comment and not attempt to improve the same. Ironically only yesterday his Excellency Mr. Parthasarathy was explaining how the UN rose from the need for a change.

It's easy to say that the EB was a little too lenient for no apparent reason. There was, however, a given reason behind that. In a committee with mostly first timers, sternness of the EB might have edged some anxious novices further into their cocoon of under confidence, and consequently, silence (which wouldn't lead to much debating either).

While some were of the opinion that the procedural lenience was justified, given the immaturity of the committee, few others were of a different opinion. The

latter believed that precious time for a potential debate was being wasted in feedback and research time, giving the Chairperson's consideration the name of incompetence.

But deciding if the committee's focus should be on formal MUN proceedings or on a cognitive understanding and healthy learning environment, is something subjective.

The EB was also commendably receptive to perspectives. Member Syeda Sana thoughtfully attempted to incorporate views of all present in the committee, including that of the International Press'. Introducing feedback might have retarded their progress but had simultaneously attempted to refine their debate.

All in all, the International Press attempts to sensitise people on the prejudices they hold against this committee on the basis of a minute's worth of observation. **While it is easy to categorise a body as inept, it is difficult to be open to all perspectives on the same.** This year's UNESCO, though judged and labeled, is an exemplar space for aspiring MUNers. Such guidance from the Board will hopefully enhance the skills of these delegates.



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Some Day, They Will Lead

Ishani Singhal zooms out to see the larger purpose behind the workings of the UNESCO.

Tomorrow's leaders are born today.

Preparing, researching, aspiring to make this world a better place. Even the most treasured leaders such as Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam and Nelson Mandela started as no more than naïve children. Every MUNner has a unique journey, but in all these, one thing remains constant - they all grow from inexperienced members of society to confident leaders.

The motto of SBSMUN- "Non Ducor; Duco" (I am not led, I lead) seeks to provide the inspired youth of today a way to the competitive world. Those who start as people being led by others, leave as leaders themselves. Nervous in the beginning, they all learn to grow to be sensitive leaders.

The UNESCO is a case in point. With most delegates being first timers, the committee progressed at a noticeably slow pace. Though relevant, points being made were often repetitive and lacked direction. Nonetheless, there was an apparent improvement in the flow of debate as time went by.

Witnessing the proceedings of the Bush Cabinet, I realised that these voracious diplomats too started from a juncture not too different from that such as the UNESCO or UNGA. A combination of opportunities and enthusiasm led them to an impressive attempt to simulate another approach to one of the biggest events in contemporary history.

So, let there be grave informality in committee proceedings. Let there be a shower of personal privileges and procedural inconsistencies. Yet, I assure you that our future is in good hands. Because at least someone's trying, and they will get there. If not today, these delegates will suggest valuable solutions some day. Some day, they will lead. Now is simply a learning process.



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Unveiling the INTER(est)ING)POL

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

Ananya Sen and Sameera Sethi delve into the minds of the people of INTERPOL - including the 'logis'!

The Conference Staff

In a rather unsurprising turn of events, the logistical members (*logis*) now speak.

Rupalika, an organising committee member of the INTERPOL, talked about her views on the participating in an MUN, "the best part of being a *logi* is that you get to eat the good MUN food," added as an afterthought, "Plus you get to meet new people."



But there's always something to spoil every food spread, as there is with MUNs. "People are always ordering you around. If they're not, then you're bored", she said.

The Executive Board isn't to be spared, the OC members gossip about them too! "The President always specifies that he wants sugar in his coffee, and the Vice President doesn't speak much." As for the Rapporteur, delicately laughs, "He is very nice!"

A dilemma faced by not just *logis*, but every person in the committee, 'how not to doze off in committee?' Rupalika countered this by playing 'chopsticks' or 'stone, paper, scissors,' something that went unnoticed because "everyone else had their eyes half closed."



In conclusion, be warned delegates! The Organising Committee Members notice EVERYTHING - not just the chits you send, but also the people you ogle at!

The Delegates



Why does this agenda interest the Delegates?

China: "It increases your knowledge a lot. We didn't know there were so many other topics involved, such as tax evasion and money laundering."

South Africa: "It's a recent issue. There are no solutions to it yet. Being able to discuss something that hasn't been discussed before is quite interesting."



Saudi Arabia: "It just came out a few months back, and it was an eye-opener. We knew there was tax evasion, but at such a large scale!"

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France: "This agenda is interesting because we live in a world where we should just think about ourselves. We need to make this world a better place, and counter tax evasion and other economic issues."



Newsflash: Information has been leaked that a majority of the Indian politicians are involved with the Panama Papers. Response?

China: "Not speaking as a delegate, if a big person's name came, it would take a lot of time for him to go to jail or for any action to even be taken against him. There could also be false accusations."

Saudi Arabia: "In Ukraine, the President was removed from power. The same would happen in India. How can you trust the government if they're involved in such a thing?"

The Executive Board

We managed to take some time out from the EB's busy schedule and engage them in conversation. Dear delegates, this may be the most important part for you, so read it better than you would read the UN Charter!

"They (the delegates) definitely have been able to form a resolution as the level of debate today was much better than yesterday. They came up with a resolution as they had more information today. They were able to relate to different subtopics with each other to form a resolution." – **President, INTERPOL**

Overall, the International Criminal Police Organisation (INTERPOL) seems to be going at a quick pace. Despite their previous inability to address important issues, the committee has chosen to move forward, and again, become capable.



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Panama Papers brings the Underbelly of Politics to the Fore

Ananya Sen writes on the effect of the Panama Papers Leak to the real world.



The recent leak of 11.5 million documents from the database of Mossack Fonseca & Co., the world's fourth-largest offshore law firm, referred to as the 'Panama Papers' has caused chaos in the realm of politics. Yet, it might not be as bad as it sounds.

These documents have records of many influential leaders and wealthy individuals who have managed to 'keep their personal financial information secret in offshore tax havens,' away from the eyes and knowledge of their respective country's governments. Amongst the personalities named are Pakistan's Prime Minister, President of Ukraine, the son of Egypt's former president, six members of UK's House of Lords and family members of China's supreme ruling body.

This was the earthquake. Aftershocks followed.

Mr. Sigmundur Davíð, the Prime Minister of Iceland, resigned after information about the possession of a secret offshore account worth millions of dollars by his wife emanated from the documents leaked from a Panama-based law firm, Mossack Fonseca. United Kingdom's Prime Minister, David Cameron, too is under scrutiny.

Despite the pandemonium, in the aftermath of the leaks, the Panama Papers have shed a new light on corruption. Earlier, African countries were consistently ranked low on the Corruption Perceptions Index; but now, it's become clear that the aforementioned problem plagues the international community, leaving none unaffected. Further, it also proves that money laundering is not limited to the government, but is an act by individuals and multi-national corporations as well.

This is beneficial to nations, in spite of the mayhem caused, because citizens can now make an informed decision about who will lead their country. Would it be one a hypocrite, who claims to fight what he feeds on, or an emerging body that will grow from the ruins of the earlier ruling party?

In an effort to clean up, public figures have sworn to take matters seriously and pass laws to counter their disparagement. There will be pressure for tax reform, and the same laws would be strengthened until the dent in their reputation is mended - if that is possible.



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The Rift Deepens

Veda Himatsingka interviews Ms Arundhati Roy and Mr Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi to understand the crack that has separated the Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Parliament into two.



Today, the members of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Parliament formed two sides to the debate, struggling to find a consensus. Torn between including and removing various aspects of the Sedition Law and rectifying the ambiguous terms, a tense debate was witnessed between the anti- and pro- sedition parties. Arundhati Roy, an activist and a strong supporter of reworking the sedition law, and Mr. Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi, the Vice President of BJP, who had a lot to say about this agenda.

What do you think was the major difference between yesterday's debate and today's debate?

Arundhati Roy: Yesterday's debate focused on different aspects of sedition, misuse of sedition laws, sedition charges pressed. Along with different issues - JNU, situation in Kashmir, issues pertaining to anti-nationalism. Today it was a divided debate, which was focused on creating a new law that doesn't consist of the word sedition itself.

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi: Yesterday's debate was more about displaying the facts on the table and how both the pro-sedition and anti-sedition lobbies took to it. Today was more about the working paper where we're drafting out the initial stages of the resolution [to redefine Sedition].

What are the main parameters that are missing from the current law? And what should be added to the new law?

Arundhati Roy: Sedition should not at all be based on speech and expression of any kind. It should only exist when violence has taken place. The current law is ambiguous and it needs to be clearly defined. The law has left a lot of scope for exploitation and interpretation by elements who use it for their benefit against the population.

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi: I believe that communal violence is a big threat to India and that it should come under the sedition law. The law by itself is very vague, and we would like to clarify and amend the language. I believe in amending the law itself and not repealing it.

What exactly is the role of violence and anti-nationalism in this law?

Arundhati Roy: The method by which people express themselves can prove to be an inconvenience for another person, now that will become violence. The actions of one that can physically or mentally hurt another being can be classified as violence. This is not acceptable at all.



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I don't think being a nationalist is going around saying "Bharat Mata Ki Jai" but is about working towards the development of your nation. You have a responsibility towards your nation and a nationalist would work towards development of both.

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi: The Supreme Court interpreted the sedition law as if you incite violence at any place against the state or the government will come under sedition. We as of now uphold that.

There are a lot of anti national notions against the government. Anti-nationalism is a notion that is not guaranteed for by the constitution of India. The citizens of India are legally and emotionally bound to the constitution and going against it could have dire consequences.

How exactly do you expect to balance the Freedom of Speech and Expression with the Sedition law?

Muktar Abbas Naqvi: We're not saying that you're not allowed to criticise the government. If you have something to say please go out and say it. But use that right respectfully and judiciously. However if you use that right to spread hate against the government now that is not acceptable.



Comments on the statement made by Mr. Ram Jethmalani, "You are just an activist. You have no right to question the Prime Minister" to Arundhati Roy?

Arundhati Roy: How can you tell a citizen that he has no rights to question the prime minister of India who is the representative of the people! I just don't understand his point.

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi: I think he was a little carried away. I think what he meant to say was that, Narendra Modi as the prime minister is there to fulfil the people's expectations. We should have a little faith in him and trust him to know what he's doing.

Mohan Bhagwat had apparently lost his way as he was supporting a team that he was against, not only that a few delegates also told him that he was not supporting the right group but he was intent on supporting the other group because it had his friend.

What would happen if such things started happening in real life?

-Varaang S. Raturi

What are your expectations from the committee?

Arundhati Roy: I hope that the resolution that will pass will help change the ideologies of people. They need to understand that criticism in any form is okay. The majority elects the government, but there are still certain people who might not agree with them. You cannot generalise people into loving and agreeing with the government.

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi: We can see that revolts against the governments of countries are increasing worldwide. Repealing laws such as the sedition law is not going to help. We have to find a way to avoid that in India. India is one of the most free countries in the world and we want to keep it that way.



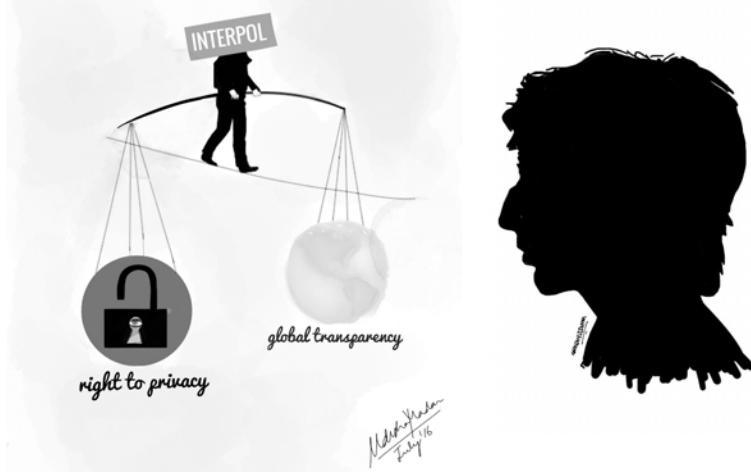
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The Wandering Lens (or was it eyes?)



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