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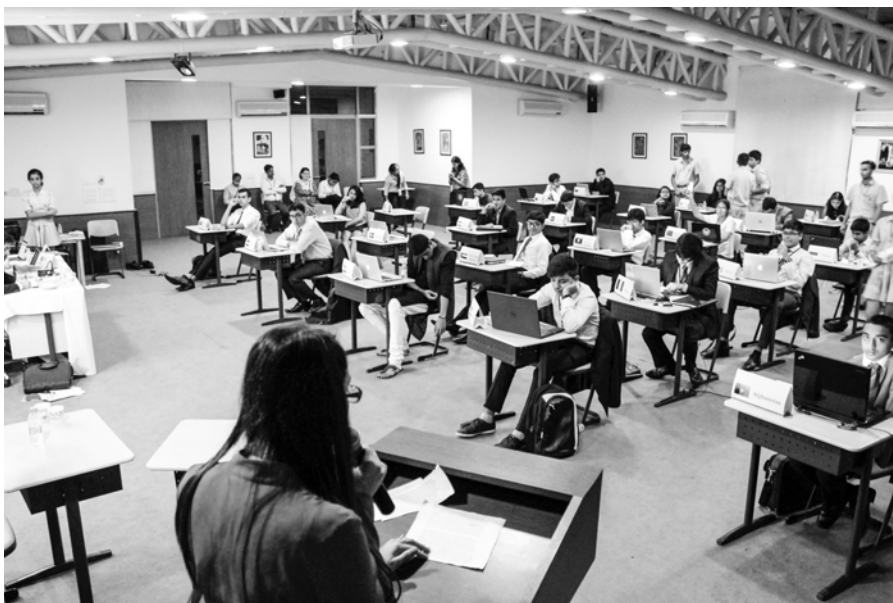
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Powdered Bombs

Ananya Sen talks about the magnitude of bio-terrorism, and UNGA's progress in countering it.



While biological weapon is granular in appearance, it's colossal in nature.

A few days after 9/11, when a retired Air Force colonel, Mr. Randall Larsen, entered the White House, he was surprised to see how tight the security had become at the President's mansion. Once he was through, and Tara O'Toole gave her presentation on biological weapons, the then Vice President asked, "But what are we looking for? What does a biological weapon look like?" At this, Larsen pulled out a small test tube from his briefcase and said, "It looks like this." Inside was '*Bacillus Globigii*', a powder identical to anthrax. "And by the way," he said, "I just smuggled this into your office."

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) went into great detail addressing every aspect of the agenda – the threat posed by bio-terrorism to life and its effect on volatile nations. However, at the cost of discussing few topics in great details, the committee failed to contemplate on its overall impact on society.

Though the committee was off to a slow start, they picked up after the first few sessions. In the words of the President, "On day 2 we jumped the gun, with

delegates eager to bring in solutions... debate sidetracked a bit, because people slept over and forgot what was going on, but we picked up again in the evening."

The delegates analysed various case studies and discussed the threats posed by bio-terrorism - 'the poor man's atomic bomb.'

The solutions put forth by the young negotiators were at the sub-national, national and international levels, an improvement to the previous contracts that only catered to the international community. Yet, the representatives failed to bring forward the issue of bio-terrorism in the Middle East, a region that is highly susceptible to violence due to its volatile nature.

Overall, the committee has done surprisingly well, covering a majority of the important subtopics of the agenda. As said in the movie *Black Hawk Down*, "It's what you do right now that makes a difference." Hopefully, UNGA's decisions would lead to advancement in countering bio-terrorism in the world today, and maybe, instead of powdered bombs, we'll find peace.

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Contradictions Diminish, Conclusion in Sight

By Imran Batra and Vedika Himatsingka

After two days of stating innumerable facts, the ‘debate’ in the UNGA turned out to be futile and inconclusive – in fact, there was no debate. Instead of discussing the agenda, the delegates merely presented it and dived into the resolutions straight away.

On the first day, the committee discussed various topics related to bioterrorism. The following day, rather than bridging the gap between the debate and the resolutions with the potential solutions, working papers were drafted immediately.

In conversation with the Executive Board, we found dissatisfaction with the topics debated. Bioterrorism in the Middle East was never discussed, and the emphasis on volatile nations was disregarded, and once again, the delegates were eager to create working papers.

However, not all working papers were authentic. The delegate of France, who very subtly hinted at the infamous plagiarised working paper, said, “Our resolution, I think is one of the better resolutions sent to the EB, disregarding the first one that ‘failed’.”

The end of the second day saw the formation of two major blocs. Even though there were many similar points in the draft resolutions, contradictory views prevented them from merging. Once again, the delegate of France said, “I feel that there are a lot of points in both draft resolutions that are similar and many a times I’ve raised the motion to merge the resolutions (...).



But there were some differences amongst the delegates, which is why the resolution wasn’t passed. “

However, by the third day, these opposing views weren’t prominent. Countries were beginning to cooperate. Countries were starting to overlook their personal politics and work towards the benefit of their respective countries. The delegate of Somalia said in this regard, “... Somalia is supportive of the Draft Resolution, as long as they (Authors of the Draft Resolution) intend to provide support to nations like Somalia who are under high risk of biological threat...”

Contradiction had diminished, and it seemed like the committee would reach a consensus by the end of the third day.



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Committee Misses Nuances of Law, But there is still Hope

Naina Atri analyses the latest deliberations in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Parliament.



Mohan Bhagwat, the chief of the *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh* (RSS), has created many controversial statements that have added fuel to the already fiery Ad Hoc Committee of the Indian Parliament.

Day three's statement revolved around the fact that Hindus are the only ones jailed and charged under crimes while Muslims manage to evade the radar. The RSS was simply a voice for the suppressed majority. However, when the leader was asked about the violence the RSS is famed for he says, "I ask them [the organisation] for what they are killing people." He also said that the RSS should be blamed for the numerous cases of violence. Perhaps throwing his people under the bus is his 'get out of the jail' card.

This instance is one of the fitting examples of one of the many aspects of the committee: confusion and contradiction. The second aspect is ignorance.

Mehbooba Mufti Sayeed emphasised on her belief when interviewed. He said, "My plans on long term actions remain talking and talking to a certain extent." Mohan Bhagwat was requested by her to 'abort' notions of violence and 'establishment of Hindu Raj'. She also mentioned that she believed in giving chances to people.

Perhaps she didn't realise that decades of talks had gone by and that action needed to be taken place. Perhaps this 'chance' would be misused and thus, costing thousands their lives and sanity.

The last aspect of today's committee dealt with the directives and resolutions with an undertone of ambiguity and naivety.

Directive 1.0, authored by Mrs Sayeed, Mr Muqtar Abbas Naqvi and Mr Rajnath Singh, was pitiful and under-researched.

Apparently, Hindutva leaders are guilty enough to require simple reminders however, with the instances of violence attached to their names, they should be charged. The reason behind reminders is that these leaders mustn't be angered. Obviously, rule of law exempts temperaments and influential leaders.

It was suggested that forces should monitor minorities as though they are the only one who instigate and create riots which disrupt public order.



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“You can’t change the definition of sedition in the Oxford Dictionary,” Nivedita Menon commented while speaking to the authors of Directive 1.0. This simple statement showed lack of research and understanding of basics of agenda. Confusions also aroused related to the difference between ‘inciting’ and ‘advocating’. Such confusions could lead to disastrous events, which include misuse and misinterpretation of the law.

Directive 2.0, authored by Nivedita Menon, Arundhati Roy and Ramachandra Guha, was repetitive yet a little more logical.

However, the one aspect which caused immense frustration was the reminder to have police and military forces in volatile areas. Again, they only stressed upon police force and curfews with no actual long term solutions. Police force isn’t enough, curbing a handful of protests isn’t enough; police members belong to communities too and they could affect protests, which on the first hand might not even be violent.



Let’s all face the harsh reality that procedures aren’t favourable when it comes to the authority and agencies relating to the authority.

“You can’t arrest each and every person” argued Ram Jethmalani when Nivedita Menon mentioned that arresting two people wasn’t a true achievement of the police force. With such a large population, forces could easily be deployed from other regions.

However, a mob can fall apart without leaders; this is just the concept of simple warfare.

Egos and promotion of their own papers are stopping the members of the committees from coming to a conclusion that safeguards the people.

Solutions produced simply touch the surface of developing amity in India however the future is ignored. Instead of accepting mistakes, blame games and arguments played out.

But, there was hope in the committee.

They understood the freedom of expression provided by the constitution as well as its exceptions. Authors of Directive 2.0 have understood that inciting violence could be criminally charged while advocating the same didn’t come under criminal law. They also understood that the violence instigated against the government would only be charged when it would disrupt public order and not sentiments.

Will the true essence of democracy fade out in the name of sentiments and creation of amity in our country?

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The Council Culminates in Cooperation

Tanvi Jhunjhunwala describes the events in the Security Council on Day Three.

The final day of the Security Council did not proceed with absolute harmony, and the delegates faced some problems in trying to complete their working paper. Even though they faced a difference of opinions, the delegates worked well together to collate all their points.

The agenda for the Security Council was developing an emergency response mechanism for International Health Regulations with special emphasis on international peace and security. The final draft of their working paper seemed to cover all these aspects well. The delegates reached some important conclusions about raising health standards world over, including gathering funds for scientific research on faster methods of diagnosis and making laboratories well equipped. The delegates focused on the importance of using productive, efficient human capital and building quicker healthcare systems.

The delegates focused primarily on what to do in case of an emergency; with disputes arising on whether tax reduction is the right way to go. While the delegate of China felt that lower taxes would result in citizens having a higher spending power, another delegate felt that lower taxes would lead to the government being



unable to efficiently take care of its citizens. However, these disputes were resolved and the Security Council was able to finish a final draft of their working paper.

The three days of the SBS MUN 2016 saw the Security Council conduct many fierce debates, saw a plethora of fresh ideas and the development of many budding friendships. It may have had a slow beginning, but definitely a dynamic end.



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UNSC Resolution to combat Global Illness

Sashrika Pathak reports on the proceedings from the UN Security Council.



“Developing an emergency response mechanism for international health regulation with special emphasis on international peace and security”: With this agenda the Security Council aimed to discuss and deliberate on the International Health Regulation as well as formulate a resolution to enhance the existing response and prevention mechanism. In summation, the agenda sought to safeguard world peace and development from potential health emergencies, which could theoretically devastate economies.

In light of the latest Ebola and Zika Virus outbreaks, the world is concerned with the international responses to control and check these outbreaks. With over-populated and under developed countries, a single virus could set back the nation’s progress by decades. The regulations of the IHR require all countries to detect, assess, report and respond to public health events. These regulations hope to protect neighbouring countries from the threat and also wish to control the health emergency in the victim state.

The need for a stronger response system increases with the growing global interconnectivity and its induced vulnerability to communicable diseases. With the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak in 2003, the world’s awareness on the impact of health emergencies grew. It made the IHR more future-oriented and flexible as well as reinforced their obligation to all 196 WHO members for cooperatively working towards global health security.

The Ebola outbreak that began in West Africa in December 2013 was the largest outbreak of the disease to be recorded, resulting in high morbidity and mortality and considerable economic impact on the countries hardest hit. This was a major setback for the IHR and hinted towards the need for a stronger and more advanced response system.

This year, the committee assembled and discussed the agenda and the problems it addresses. For the first two days, delegates discussed the importance of IHR in reference to the Ebola and Zika outbreaks. They also talked about the importance of transparency, trusted communication between countries and concerned crisis. Russia keenly mentioned the socio-economic impacts of these diseases and other delegates, namely that of Spain and France, and reinforced the need for an assessment of the WHO and health support mechanisms.

Delegate of China communicated the necessity of citizen cooperation and an advanced emergency medical team. All in all, the delegates agreed on the importance of improvements in both medical and transport-communication facilities.

On the third day, all delegates utilised their unmoderated caucus effectively and formed an elaborative resolution. The draft emphasised on the significance of improving medical teams. Spain explained how one could hope to achieve this by training medical employees to a level optimum for enhanced recognition and treatment of diseases. Russia elaborated on the need to be strong on both the transport and technological front to be able to recognise and tackle diseases. Mindful of the economic impact of such emergencies on the public, the draft empathetically suggested a lax on taxes during the response. The document also included the shared demand for donations from developed countries to the under developed ones to enable medical progress uniformly across the globe.

In conclusion, the committee seems to have had a fruitful session on all three days and had managed to form a conclusive resolution to address their agenda.

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World Peace, Amen!

Ishani Singhal reflects on the debate in the George Bush Cabinet on the third day of their meeting.



History cannot be changed. However, a credulous attempt to relive the past can help alter results of such impactful events in the future. If there was a time machine and today's millennials were world diplomats, the Gulf War would've steered in an interesting direction.

From aggressive war convictions to long drawn discussions on humanitarian impacts of the war, the committee witnessed disparate views on dealing with the agenda. Among just nine people present in the cabinet, outlooks presented were vividly diverse.

While 90 persons was an atrocious casualty for one, it was 'pretty good' for another. Yet so, a casualty of 1,500-1,700 was irrelevant to the delegates sitting there. What is unambiguously clear is that lives matter only with respect to priorities and context. For a common man, that is an unreasonable massacre. For delegates dealing with world controversies and war, it's only an inevitable implication.

It's a little too easy to hope for world peace sipping tea in ignorance. The real situation is quite the contrary. Troops, tanks, aircrafts, ships – much of all lost as casualties to the war. Yet, detailed plots to rescue one politically valuable life. That is how it works. Victory is not 'who lost lesser lives'; it's 'who saved the relevant ones'.

It is not to say that casualties in a war make delegates bad decision makers. But, that them being right in their own place is the sad truth. My teacher once said, "History is the reconstruction of a perspective on the

past among uncountable ones, none wrong." The simulation of George H.W. Bush's Cabinet was an alternative possibility to one perspective. One perspective on a small part of one of the most haunting events in history.

World peace as we know it is a myth. Repetitive attempts to change that, however, are not in vain. Peace can never be absolute, but it can be comparative. I like to believe that future holds for us lesser violent approaches to berserk events, to be a little more peaceful than the past.



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