



Nehru's
97
Major
Blunders

Rajnikant Puranik

Study the past, if you would divine the future.
—Confucius

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(Blunders is used in this book as a general term to also include failures, neglect, wrong policies, bad decisions, despicable and disgraceful acts, usurping undeserved posts, etc.)

Rajnikant Puranik

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by

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Preface

Study the past, if you would divine the future.

—Confucius

*Those who do not learn from history
are doomed to repeat it.*

—George Santayana (1963–1952)

*Disregard for the past will never do us any good.
Without it we cannot know truly who we are.*

—Syd Moore

But for a series of major blunders by Nehru across the spectrum—it would not be an exaggeration to say that he blundered comprehensively—India would have been on a rapidly ascending path to becoming a shining, prosperous, first-world country by the end of his term, and would surely have become so by early 1980s—provided, of course, Nehru’s dynasty had not followed him to power. Sadly, Nehru era laid the foundations of India’s poverty and misery, condemning it to be forever a developing, third-rate, third-world country.

By chronicling those blunders, this book highlights THE FACTS BEHIND THE FACADE.

This is a compact book summarising 97 major blunders of Nehru. However, while all major blunders are not covered, none of the minor blunders are included.

The focus being on blunders, this book does not cover Nehru’s positives—there are a sea of books eulogising Nehru, and reader can refer to them.

Blunders is used in this book as a general term to also include failures, neglect, wrong policies, bad decisions, despicable and disgraceful acts, usurping undeserved posts, etc.

It is not the intention of this book to be critical of Nehru, but historical facts, that have often been distorted or glossed over or suppressed must be known widely, lest the mistakes be repeated, and so that India has a brighter future.

This book is different from my earlier voluminous book “*Foundations of Misery: The Nehruvian Era 1947–64*” (available on Amazon both in the digital and in paperback edition) which does not cover as many blunders as this book

does, nor lists them systematically and exhaustively; but which deals in detail with the background, history and particulars of the *Integration of the Indian States*; *Kashmir: BCE to 1950s*; *Tibet: Erasing a Nation*; *Himalayan Misadventure* (India-China War); *The Sinhala & the Tamils* (On Sri-Lankan Tamil Problem); *India's Self-Inflicted Poverty*; *Socialism, Babudom & Corruption*; *Being Foreign to Foreign Policy* (Disastrous Policies on External Affairs); *Ill-informed Internal Policies*; *Mental & Cultural Slavery*; *Distortion of History & Cultural Heritage*; *Dynacracy* (Dynastic Democracy), and so on.

This book has a wider coverage compared to the above, but does not deal in the background, history and details like the above does. Many aspects which you would find in this book you would not find in the book above, and vice versa.

— Rajnikant Puranik

To the fond memory of my late parents

Shrimati Shakuntala and
Shri Laxminarayan Puranik

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Prologue

Shashi Tharoor titled his book '*Nehru: the Invention of India*'. Yes, Nehru was honest, upright, knowledgeable, secular, cultured, hard-working, and a man of integrity. He was a capable leader, who gave his all to the nation. One also has to appreciate Nehru's physical fitness, despite his busy and stressful life—it was thanks to yoga and his healthy life style. He was reportedly a singularly unmedicated body till about two years before his death.

He wrote books, and they were good, though not great. They were rather average.

He was courageous—unlike the current nobodies moving under loads of security. Once during the 1947 riots, when he saw a person being attacked in Chandni Chowk, he stopped his car and personally charged-in to save him.

He was a popular leader. He valued the virtues of parliamentary democracy, secularism and liberalism. He was one of the founders of Non-Aligned Movement.

As an unfailing nationalist, he implemented policies which stressed commonality among Indians while still appreciating regional diversities. He was instrumental in setting up of the Planning Commission, National Laboratories, IITs, IIMs, and a vast public sector.

Nehru was personally an honest person. If you read MO Mathai's book '*Reminiscences of the Nehru Age*', you would come across many examples of his uprightness. MO Mathai was his PA. Like when Mathai suggested to him that he could deduct expenses for typing and other such incidentals from his income from sale of his books when filing income-tax returns to get deduction that was legally permissible, Nehru answered in the negative saying that when he had not incurred the expenses how could he seek deduction, even if legally allowed.

There is another good example from Kuldip Nayar's '*Beyond the Lines*': "This incident might prick the conscience of today's leaders. Bhim Sen Sachar, then chief minister of Punjab, approached Nehru with an embarrassing request. Vijayalakshmi Pandit had stayed at the Shimla Circuit House, then part of Punjab, and had not paid the bill of Rs 2500. Sachar was told by his governor, C. Trivedi, to put the expense under some miscellaneous state government account. However, Sachar was a stickler for propriety. Nehru said that he could not clear the bill at one go but would pay the Punjab government in instalments. Nehru sent the amount in five instalments, each time drawing a cheque on his personal

account.”

Unfortunately, Nehru allowed others to be corrupt—reminds one of Manmohan Singh!

There are a host of books that eulogise Nehru. What can be mentioned here would be a drop in the ocean. However, this book seeks to highlight the vital and critical aspects about Nehru that are often swept under the carpet. Nehruvian blunders are summarised in this book, but they are not covered in detail. For details, please read the book “*Foundations of Misery : The Nehruvian Era 1947-64*” (www.rkpbooks.com), available on Amazon both in the digital and in paperback edition.

‘Blunders’ in this book is used as a general term to also include failures, neglect, wrong policies, bad decisions, despicable and disgraceful acts, usurping undeserved posts, etc.

What They Said

“...[then] it seemed to me that Jawaharlal should be the new President [of Congress in 1946—and hence the first Prime Minister] ...I acted according to my best judgement but the way things have shaped since then has made me to realise that this was perhaps the greatest blunder of my political life... My second mistake was that when I decided not to stand myself, I did not support Sardar Patel.”

—Abul Kalam Azad, ‘India Wins Freedom’

“I am afraid Nehru is responsible for the prolongation of the [J&K] problem through his willingness to compromise at every stage. Had Vallabhbhai [Patel] been the man to handle the Kashmir question, he would have settled it long ago. At least, he would never have settled with a partial control of Jammu & Kashmir. He would have occupied the whole of the State and would never have allowed it to be elevated to international importance.”

—NV Gadgil, a Minister in the Nehru Cabinet

“...Sardar [Patel] was aware of the influence which Lord Mountbatten exercised over both Pandit Nehru and Gandhiji; often that influence was decisive... Sardar had made up his mind that Hyderabad must fit into his policy regarding the Indian states... I know how deeply anguished he used to feel at his helplessness in settling the problem with his accustomed swiftness... the decision about the Police Action in Hyderabad in which case Sardar [Patel] described the dissent of Rajaji and Pandit Nehru as ‘the wailing of two widows as to how their departed husband [meaning Gandhiji] would have reacted to the decision involving such a departure from non-violence.’”

—V Shankar in ‘My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel’

“I [Sardar Patel] have been eating my heart out because I have not been able to make him [Nehru] see the dangers ahead. China wants to establish its hegemony over South-East Asia. We cannot shut our eyes to this because imperialism is appearing in a new garb...He is being misled by his courtiers. I have grave apprehensions about the future.”

—Sardar Patel on Tibet and China

(Durga Das, ‘India from Curzon to Nehru & After’)

“I hope I am not seeing ghosts and phantoms, but I see the murder of Tibet recoiling on India.”

—Dr Rajendra Prasad

“This great doctrine [Panchsheel signed by Nehru] was born in sin, because it was enunciated to put the seal of our approval upon the destruction of an ancient nation [Tibet] which was associated with us spiritually and culturally... It was a nation which wanted to live its own life and it sought to have been allowed to live its own life...”

—Acharya Kriplani

“It is completely impracticable for the Chinese Government to think of anything in the nature of invasion of India. Therefore I rule it out...”

—Nehru

“The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable.”

—Field Marshall Roberts

“I can tell this House that at no time since our independence, and of course before it, were our defence forces in better condition, in finer fettle...than they are today. I am not boasting about them or comparing them with any other country’s, but I am quite confident that our defence forces are well capable of looking after our country.”

—Nehru’s statement in the Parliament

“I hope I am not leaving you as cannon fodder for the Chinese. God bless you all.”

—India’s army chief KS Thimayya in his farewell speech in 1961

“Things went so wrong [in India-China War] that had they not happened it would have been difficult to believe them.”

—S Gopal, Nehru's official biographer

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*“If the future is full of hope it is largely because of Soviet Russia.”*

—Nehru

*“Mr Jawaharlal Nehru returned from Cambridge with notions of how an all-governing interventionist state can force people into happiness and prosperity through socialism...He sticks to this bias in spite of the demonstration of world experience against it... I hate the present folly and arrogance as much as I hated the foreign arrogance of those [British] days.”*

—Rajaji

*“History will soon prove that Communism, instead of being the final flowering of human civilisation, was a temporary aberration of the human mind, a brief nightmare to be soon forgotten. Communism, as it grew up in Russia and is growing up in China now, represented the darkness of the soul and imprisonment of the mind, colossal violence and injustice. Whoever thinks of the future of the human race in these terms is condemning man to eternal perdition.”*

—Jayaprakash Narayan

*“A young man who isn't a socialist hasn't got a heart; an old man who is a socialist hasn't got a head.”*

—David Lloyd George

*“To cure the British disease with socialism was like trying to cure leukaemia with leeches.”*

—Margaret Thatcher

*“He [Nehru] had no idea of economics. He talked of Socialism, but he did not know how to define it. He talked of social justice, but I told him he could have this only when there was an increase in production. He did not grasp that. So you need a leader who understands economic issues and will invigorate your economy.”*

—Chester Bowles

*“The whole political vision of the left, including socialism and communism, has failed by virtually every empirical test, in countries all around the world. But this has only led leftist intellectuals to evade and denigrate empirical evidence... ...When the world fails to conform to their vision, then it seems obvious to the ideologues that it is the world that is wrong, not that their vision is uninformed or unrealistic.”*

—Thomas Sowell

*“Poor countries are poor because those who have power make choices that create poverty.” Such countries develop “extractive” institutions that “keep poor countries poor”.*

—Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson in ‘Why Nations Fail’  
(Nehru laid the foundations of ‘Extractive Institutions’)

*“While I usually came back from meeting Gandhiji elated and inspired but always a bit sceptical, and from talks with Jawaharlal [Nehru] fired with emotional zeal but often confused and unconvinced, meetings with Vallabhbhai*

*[Patel] were a joy from which I returned with renewed confidence in the future of our country. I have often thought that if fate had decreed that he, instead of Jawaharlal, would be younger of the two, India would have followed a very different path and would be in better economic shape than it is today.”*

— JRD Tata

*“Nehru’s inability to rise above his deep-rooted Marxist equation of Western capitalism with imperialism, and his almost paranoid, partly aristocratic, distrust of free enterprise in its most successful form as ‘vulgar’, cost India dearly in retarding its overall development for the remaining years of his rule, as well as for the even longer reign of his more narrowly doctrinaire daughter.”*

—Stanley Wolpert, ‘Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny’

*“Nehru rooted India’s foreign policy in abstract ideas rather than a strategic conception of national interests. He disdained alliances, pacts, and treaties, seeing them as part of the old rules of realpolitik, and was uninterested in military matters...Nehru tended to put hope above calculation. When he was warned that Communist China would probably seek to annex Tibet, for example, he doubted it, arguing that it would be foolish and impractical adventure. And even after Beijing did annex Tibet in 1951, Nehru would not reassess the nature of Chinese interests along India’s northern border...”*

—Fareed Zakaria, ‘The Post-American World’

*“Malcolm Muggeridge, after seeing Nehru shortly before his death, characterized him as “a man of echoes and mimicry, the last viceroy rather than the first leader of a liberated India”, and regretted that Nehru was much too British in his approach to have been able to bring about significant or radical changes in India.*

— Sankar Ghose in ‘Jawaharlal Nehru, a Biography’

*“You know, I never go to Nehru to seek advice or guidance. I take a decision and just present it to him as a fait accompli. Nehru’s mind is too complex to wrestle with the intricacies of a problem. Those who go to him for advice rarely get a lead—and that only serves to delay matters... Nehru does not understand economics, and is lead by the nose by ‘professors’ and ‘experts’ who pander to his whims and fancies... We should have absorbed Kashmir for good and all... I do not know where we are going. The country needs a man like Patel.”*

—Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, Nehru’s close friend and confidant

## What Nehru Said

*"We were getting out of touch with reality in the modern world and we were living in an artificial atmosphere of our creation..."*

*"We feel India has been ill-repaid for her diplomatic friendliness toward Peking...Difficult to say the Chinese have deliberately deceived us...We may have deceived ourselves..."*

*"I have been betrayed by a friend. I am sorry for Tibet."*

*"I am the last Englishman to rule India!"*

*"...in my likes and dislikes I was perhaps more an Englishman than an Indian. I looked upon the world from an Englishman's standpoint."*

~~~

In his book 'Glimpses of World History', Nehru quotes Alberuni writing about the havoc caused by Mahmud of Ghazni: *"The Hindus became like the atoms of dust scattered in all directions and like a tale of old in the mouths of people. Their scattered remains cherish of course the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims..."*

Nehru then comments, *"This poetic description gives us an idea..."* So, Nehru found Alberuni's description of the terrible misfortune wrought on India and Hindus poetic!!

In his book, Nehru also writes: *"...As a matter of fact, he [Mahmud] was hardly a religious man... Above everything he was soldier, and a brilliant soldier. He came to India to conquer and loot, as soldiers unfortunately do, and he would have done so to whatever religion he might have belonged..."* However, as per the contemporary history, when Mahmud of Ghazni was carrying away the Shiva idol of gold from the Somnath temple, many rich traders came together and offered him even more wealth if he returned the idol. Mahmud's retort was: *"I am an idol-breaker, not an idol-seller!"*

Nehru further writes about Mathura: *"Mahmud was anxious to make his own city of Ghazni rival the great cities of central and western Asia and he carried off from India large number of artisans and master builders. Building interested him and he was much impressed by the city of Mathura near Delhi. About this Mahmud wrote: 'There are here a thousand edifices as firm as the faith of the faithful; nor is it likely that this city has attained its present condition but at the expense of many millions of dinars, nor could such another be constructed under a period of 200 years.'"*

What is interesting and intriguing is that nowhere there is any mention by Nehru of how this Mahmud, *the lover of buildings as he calls him*, mercilessly destroyed Mathura and Somnath!

Wrote Al Utbi, an aide and secretary of Mahmud of Ghazni, in Tarikh-e Yamini about Mathura: *"The Sultan gave orders that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire and levelled with the ground... Musulmans paid no regard to the booty till they had satiated themselves with the slaughter of the infidels and worshippers of the sun and fire."*

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*"...several ministers who used to squat on the floor and eat off brass plates or plantain leaves in their homes were now trying to ape Western ways. They contended that Nehru considered only Westernised people modern..."*

—Durga Das, 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After'

*"Jawahar wants Englishmen to go but Angreziat to stay. I want Angreziat to go but Englishmen to remain as our friends."*

—Mahatma Gandhi

## **Pre-Independence Blunders**

Not many blunders are listed under Nehru's '*Pre-independence Blunders*' below, compared to his 'Post-independence Blunders' later, because in the former period Nehru was not fully in-charge. There was Mahatma Gandhi on top, and there were many other leaders of stature, to keep him in check. Despite that, whenever Nehru held an official position bestowing him with some discretion, and an opportunity presented itself,...

### ***Blunder-1 :*** **Usurping Presidentship in 1929**

Jawaharlal Nehru was given an unfair leg up on Sardar Patel in 1929 by Gandhi, and made President of the Congress, despite the following facts that overwhelmingly made Sardar the deserving candidate.

Patel had led the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 whose resounding success had made him a national hero, and bestowed on him the title *Sardar*. The Bardoli Satyagraha was the first successful practical implementation of the Gandhian non-violent technique involving the rural masses on the ground.

Nehru lacked such credentials. Besides, Sardar Patel was much senior to Jawaharlal, and a larger number of Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs: legal body to elect President) had recommended him over Jawaharlal.

Yet, Gandhi, most unjustly and undemocratically, asked Patel to withdraw! Gandhi thereby tried to establish an unjust pecking order where Jawaharlal came before Patel.

Netaji Subhas Bose had subsequently written: “The general feeling in Congress circles was that the honour should go to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.”

Acharya Kriplani had remarked that Gandhi’s reasons for preferring Jawaharlal “were personal rather than political”.

Jawaharlal’s father Motilal had a major role to play in Jawaharlal’s undeserved elevation. Motilal was the Congress President in 1928. He desired that his position be inherited by his son.

Subsequent to Patel’s Bardoli win, Motilal wrote to Gandhi on 11 July 1928: *“I am quite clear that the hero of the hour is Vallabhbhai, and the least we can do is to offer him the crown [make him President of the Congress]. Failing him, I think that under all the circumstances Jawahar would be the best choice.”* Motilal actively canvassed for Jawaharlal with Gandhi.

Nepotism and “fight” for freedom went together: Nehrus from Motilal downwards ensured their family was well taken care of; and that it came first, ahead of the nation! In the long run, the nation paid heavily for Motilal’s brazen nepotism, exemplarily emulated by his dynasty.

The presidentship during 1929-30 was particularly significant: the one who became president was likely to be Gandhi’s successor; and he was also to declare the goal of the Congress as “purn swaraj” or complete independence (so late!!).

Jawaharlal was also favoured by Gandhi with an unprecedented second consecutive term in 1930, then another two terms in 1936 and 1937, topped by the critical term in 1946! Such privilege was not accorded to any other leader—even Sardar Patel was made President only once for one year! The Old Man's weakness for the Westernized Nehru over the home-spun fellow Gujarati [Patel] was yet another aspect of “*Swadeshi*” Gandhi's self-contradictory personality. How Jawaharlal managed to become the “spiritual son” of Gandhi is a mystery. Wrote MN Roy in “The Men I Met”: “It can reasonably be doubted if Nehru could have become the hero of Indian Nationalism except as the spiritual son of Gandhi...To purchase popularity, Nehru had to suppress his own personality...”

## ***Blunder-2 :***

### **Setting Jinnah on Path to Pakistan**

Gandhi had taken a decision in 1934 not to boycott elections. Soon after release from jail in July 1934, Patel devoted himself to 1934-elections to the Central Legislative Assembly, playing the leading role in selecting and financing candidates. He became the chairman of the party's Central Parliamentary Board, and also its main fund-raiser. He also guided the Congress through the Provincial elections of 1936.

In the Central Legislative Assembly of 145, 41 seats were for the nominated, unelected members, leaving 104 for elected members. Out of that 104, 8 seats were reserved for Europeans, and 11 for landlords and others, leaving a net of 85 seats. Out of them, in 1934, the Congress won 44 of the 49 general seats, and 17 of the reserved seats—a total of 61 out of a possible maximum of 85, almost 72%. However, given 41 unelected/nominated seats, the Congress could not have a majority.

In the 1936-37 provincial elections in 11 provinces, the Congress won an absolute majority in 5 (UP, Bihar, Madras, CP (Central Provinces) and Orissa), and emerged as the largest party in 4 (Bombay, Bengal, Assam and NWFP). The Congress ministries were formed in a total of 8 provinces. They were headed (called Premiers) by Govind Ballabh Pant in UP, Shrikrishna Sinha in Bihar, NB Khare in CP, BG Kher in Bombay, Rajaji in Madras. Bishwanath Das in Orissa, Gopinath Bardoloi in Assam, and Dr Khan Sahib in NWFP. Overall, in the assembly (provincial) elections, the Congress had won 719 of 1585 seats—less than 50%—and it had polled about 94 lakh votes against the total of all the opposition of about 110 lakh votes—again less than 50%: as such, the Congress had no reason to be too arrogant! Jinnah's Muslim League won a total of 108 seats across India, including 20 of the 30 Muslim seats in the Bombay Assembly; and 26 seats in UP against 134 of the Congress.

So as to have a say in each province, Jinnah proposed Congress–Muslim League coalition in the name of Hindu–Muslim unity. The Congress, however, did not take up Jinnah's offer. To Jinnah's proposal of inclusion of two Muslim League Ministers in the Bombay cabinet, the Congress put forth an amazing, arrogant condition: the League legislators must merge with the Congress! The humiliating condition was naturally rejected by Jinnah. Similar talks for UP also broke down on Nehru and Maulana Azad's insistence on merger. Nehru had arrogantly stated: "In the final analysis there are only two forces in India—

British imperialism and Congress representing Indian nationalism.”

The above needs to be seen in the light of the following. Before the elections, the Congress did not expect to get enough seats to form a government on its own in UP, in view of the other parties in the fray who had strong backing of landlords and influential sections. So as to be able to form a government, it had planned for a suitable coalition with the Muslim League. So that the Muslim League got enough seats for a coalition to be successful, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai of the Congress—who had been private secretary of Motilal Nehru, and after his death, a principal aide of Jawaharlal Nehru—had persuaded, along with Nehru, several influential Muslims (like Khaliq-uz-Zaman, Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan) in the Congress who had the potential to win to fight the elections on behalf of the Muslim League (as Muslims fighting on behalf of the Muslim League had better chances). They fought and won. But, after the elections, when the Congress found it could form the government on its own, without the help of the Muslim League, it began to put the unreasonable conditions described above.

The incident led Muslim leaders to believe that a majority Congress government would always tend to ride rough-shod over the Muslim interests. It is claimed that thanks to the above the badly hurt pride of the Muslims led them to move away from the Congress and quickly gravitate towards the Muslim League, and ultimately to separation. The membership of the Muslim League dramatically rose after the incident. The humiliated Muslim League aspirants Khaliq-uz-Zaman and Nawab Mohammad Ismail Khan whose ambitions were thus thwarted by the Congress and Nehru thereafter became the pillars of Muslim reaction and played a critical role in swinging the Muslim opinion in favour of partition and Pakistan.

The British were only too glad at the development. The Secretary of State Birkenhead wrote to the Viceroy: “I have placed my highest and most permanent hopes in the eternity of the communal situation.”

It was unwise of the Congress, Nehru and Gandhi not to show a little generosity towards the League. Reportedly, Sardar Patel, Gandhi and others were willing for a coalition with the Muslim League as per the pre-election understanding, but Nehru, in his “wisdom” and hubris, decided to act arrogant, and led the way for the ultimate parting of ways with Jinnah and the Muslim League, and for Partition and Pakistan—Nehru was the Congress President in 1936 and 1937.

***Blunder–3 :***  
**Scoring Self-Goal—Resignations of Ministries**

“Internationalist” Nehru, though vociferously most anti-fascist and anti-Nazi, advocated rabidly anti-British stand in the wake of the British declaration of war against Germany on 3 September 1939 on behalf of India. Curiously, being more a socialist and a communist sympathiser than an “internationalist”, Nehru changed his tune soon after Russia joined the war in 1941 on the side of Britain, and against Nazis!

The hard-won (thanks mainly to the efforts of Sardar Patel) Congress ministries in the provinces since 1937, under the strict vigilance of Patel, had begun to perform better than expected. To guide and coordinate the activities of the provincial governments, a central control board known as the Parliamentary Sub-Committee was formed, with Sardar Patel, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Rajendra Prasad as members. A number of measures in the interest of the general public had been taken. Many Congress ministers set an example in plain living. They reduced their own salaries. They made themselves easily accessible to the common people. In a very short time, a very large number of ameliorative legislations were pushed through in an attempt to fulfil many of the promises made in the Congress election manifesto.

Emergency powers acquired by the provincial governments through the Public Safety Acts and the like were repealed. Bans on illegal political organizations such as the Hindustan Seva Dal and Youth Leagues and on political books and journals were lifted. All restrictions on the press were removed. Securities taken from newspapers and presses were refunded and pending prosecutions were withdrawn. The blacklisting of newspapers for purposes of government advertising was given up. Confiscated arms were returned and forfeited arms licenses were restored. In the Congress provinces, police powers were curbed and the reporting of public speeches and the shadowing of political workers by CID agents stopped. Another big achievement of the Congress Governments was their firm handling of the communal riots.

The success rankled both with the Muslim League and the British: they never wanted the Congress to get popular.

However, ignoring the adverse consequences of getting out of the government at that stage, Nehru threatened in 1939 to pull out from ministries in various provinces, in response to the British declaration of war on behalf of India without consulting the Congress—something the British would have only

welcomed!

Nehru took a stand that “friendship between India and England is possible but only on equal terms”. Further, India could not fight for freedom of others when it was itself unfree. All that tall talk was fine if the Congress had the strength to impose its will, and be capable of being enough of a nuisance for the British to stand up and take notice. But, when the British perceived the Gandhian methods as no threat at all, where was the need for them to heed?

Patel and Gandhi were not in favour of ministries resigning; but Nehru & Co—the leftists—insisted upon it. All the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned by November 1939. The resignations were effectively a victory of the Congress Left. Had Gandhi’s prudence and wisdom of supporting the British in their war effort been followed, and had Nehru’s thoughtless emotional opposition been ignored, the Congress would have retained an upper hand against the Muslim League, and may have better managed India’s cause with the British. Resignations of the Provincial Ministries threw the Congress into wilderness.

Nehru should have realised that the Gandhian Congress was a pleader for freedom, and not a fighter for freedom. Pleaders can plead. But, they can’t dictate terms.



### ***Blunder-4 : Leg-up to Jinnah***

Resignation of the Congress ministries in 1939 was welcomed both by Jinnah and the British authorities.

Jinnah and the Muslim League went to the extent of calling upon all Muslims to celebrate 22 December 1939 as the “*Deliverance Day*”—deliverance from the “misrule” of the Congress. Jinnah took full advantage of it, and his stars and that of the Muslim League rose. 1939 was the watershed. 1939-onwards Muslim League was on the ascendancy, even as the clout of the Congress eclipsed.

It is worth noting that Nehru and the Congress were unnecessarily too obsessed with the Centre and the Central legislature, where Jinnah was able to play a wrecker. Had the Congress continued in its ministries, and had it played its cards well in the provinces in the Muslim-majority areas, they could have derailed Jinnah.

The Unionist Party headed by Sikandar Hyat Khan that ruled Punjab was a Muslim-Hindu-Sikh coalition. The Krishak Proja Party headed by Fazlul Huq, a nationalist Muslim, dominated Bengal. Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah had formed a Hindu-Muslim coalition in Sind, independent of the Muslim League. If the Congress had intelligently coordinated its efforts with these parties, it could have sidelined Jinnah.

But, what to speak of doing that ground work and strengthening its ties with the non-Muslim League Muslim parties, the Congress itself chose to get eclipsed by giving up its ministries, thanks to Nehru’s decision.

Congress opposition to the British declaration of World War-II on behalf of India, its non-cooperation with the British in that regard, and the unconditional, whole-hearted support extended to the British by Jinnah and the Muslim League ensured the rise of the Muslim League and the gradual eclipse of the Congress, so much so that thereafter it were the British, Jinnah and the Muslim League who dictated the terms of independence, Partition and Pakistan.

### ***Blunder-5 :*** **Assam's Security Compromised**

With the annexation of Assam by the British in 1826, British brought in the peasantry from the over-populated East-Bengal for tea plantation and other purposes. The Muslim League, in order to dominate the predominantly non-Muslim Assam and the Northeast, and make it yet another Muslim-majority region, strategized back in 1906 in its conference at Dacca to somehow increase the Muslim population in Assam, and exhorted the East-Bengal Muslims to migrate and settle in Assam. The fact of large-scale migration was also noted in the Census report of 1931. Congress leaders Bardolai, Medhi and others raised this serious issue of migration, but did not get due support from the Congress leadership at the Centre.

In 1938, when a Muslim League-headed coalition fell in Assam, Netaji Subhas Bose favoured a bid by the Congress to form a government. Several Congress leaders were opposed to the idea, particularly Maulana Azad. Sardar Patel backed Subhas Bose fully; and finally a Congress ministry led by Gopinath Bordoloi took office. With Bordoloi in office it was hoped that the Muslim migrations would be stemmed, and the game of the Muslim League would be defeated.

However, thanks to the unwise move of Nehru and his left supporters, the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned in 1939 (please see details under Blunder-3). This forced Gopinath Bordoloi to also resign in Assam, although Netaji Subhas Bose and Patel wanted Bordoloi government to continue. This was God-sent, rather Allah-sent, for the Muslim League. Pro-British Sir Syed Mohammad Saadulla of the Muslim League, from whom Bordoloi had wrested power, again took over. With the Congress in limbo on account of the unwise surrender of power in the provinces, followed by the imprisonment of its leadership in 1942 Quit India, Saadulla ruled uninterrupted for the next seven years shoring up the Muslim base in Assam.

Saadulla brought in a Land Settlement Policy in 1941 that allowed immigrants (Muslims) from East Bengal to pour into Assam, and hold as much as 30 bighas for each homestead. He boasted to Liaquat Ali Khan that through his policies he had managed to quadruple the Muslim population in the lower four districts of the Assam Valley.

In short, the demographic position became much worse in Assam thanks to the wrong decision of Nehru.

When we talk of the Northeast we must first pay our tributes to Gopinath Bordoloi (whom Nehru ignored, and who got Bharat Ratna much later when the non-Dynasty government was in power) but for whom Assam and the Northeast may not have been part of India. The initial British Plan of 1946 for the Indian Independence clubbed Assam and Bengal together in Group-C. Such an inclusion would have had the consequence of Assamese being in a minority, to be overruled into ultimately being absorbed in East-Pakistan. Sensing this ominous possibility, Bordoloi opposed being clubbed into Group-C, contrary to what Nehru had agreed to. With Nehru remaining unamenable, Bordoloi started mass agitation. He fought the Muslim League's effort to include Assam and other parts of the Northeast Region (NER) in East Pakistan. The Congress Party at the national level, led by Nehru, would have acquiesced to the Muslim League had it not been for a revolt by Bordoloi, backed by the Assam unit of the Congress Party and supported by Mahatma Gandhi and the Assamese public.

### ***Blunder-6 :*** **Undemocratic Elevation as First PM**

Post 1945, with the increasing hopes of the imminence of India's independence, all patriots looked forward to having a strong, assertive, competent, decisive, no-nonsense person as India's first prime minister, who would bring back the lost glory of India, and turn it into a modern, prosperous nation. Iron Man was the clear choice, being a cut much above the rest. And, nobody looked forward to having some undemocratic, indecisive, clueless sissy to mess up a hard-won freedom after centuries.

The Congress Party had practically witnessed Patel as a great executor, organizer and leader, with his feet on the ground. Sardar had demonstrated his prowess in the various movements and assignments, including that in the Nagpur Agitation of 1923; the Borsad Satyagraha of 1923; excellent management of the Ahmedabad Municipality during 1924-27; tackling of the Ahmedabad Floods of 1927; the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928 that earned him the title of "Sardar"; the Dandi March and the Salt Satyagraha of 1930; successful management of elections for the Congress during 1934-37; preparation, conduct and management of Haripura session of the Congress in 1938 on a massive scale; building up of the party machine; role in preparation for the Quit India Movement; and premier leadership role from 1945 onwards.

Patel's achievements were far in excess of Nehru's, and all Congress persons and the country knew it. The far greater contribution of Patel in the Quit India Movement, unmatched by Nehru, was fresh in the mind of the Congress leaders and public.

Sardar was far better academically, and much more intelligent than Nehru. Like Nehru, Sardar Patel too had studied in England. But, while Nehru's father financed all his education, Sardar financed his own education in England, through his own earnings! While Nehru could manage to scrape through in only a poor lower second-division in England, Sardar Patel topped in the first division!

Professionally too, Sardar was a successful lawyer, while Nehru was a failure. Sardar had a roaring practice, and was the highest paid lawyer in Ahmedabad, before he left it all on a call by Gandhi; while Nehru was dependent upon his father for his own upkeep, and that of his family.

Based on the ground-level practical experience since 1917, it could be said with certainty in 1946 that Nehru was no match for Sardar for the critical post of

the prime minister. Of course, Nehru as PM in practice confirmed beyond a shred of doubt that it should have been Sardar, and not him, who should have been the first PM of India. For details, please read the author's other books 'Foundations of Misery: The Nehruvian Era 1947-64' (available on Amazon).

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Whoever became the president of the Congress in 1946 would have also become the first prime minister of India, hence the presidential election was critical.

The Pradesh Congress Committees (PCCs), 15 in number, alone had the power to nominate and elect a president. Gandhi had indicated his preference for Nehru 9 days before the last date of nomination of 29 April 1946, on which date the Congress Working Committee (CWC) met to consider the nominations sent by PCCs.

Result: Not a single PCC nominated Nehru! 12 of the 15 PCCs (80%) nominated Sardar Patel. 3 of the 15 PCCs (20%) did not nominate anyone. It was therefore a non-contest. Sardar Patel was the only choice, and an undisputed choice.

But, was Sardar Patel chosen? No! It was a case of *déjà vu*—a repeat of 1929. Gandhi asked Patel to withdraw. Patel complied without a protest or delay. That cleared the ground for Nehru.

“I sent a paper round proposing the name of Jawaharlal [at the instance of Gandhi, when Gandhi observed no one had proposed Nehru, even though such nomination (other than by PCC) was illegal]... It was certain that if Jawaharlal's name had not been proposed, the Sardar would have been elected as the President... The Sardar did not like my intervention. I have since wondered if, as the General Secretary, I should have been instrumental in proposing Jawaharlal's name in deference to Gandhi's wishes in the matter... But who can forecast the future? On such seemingly trivial accidents depends the fate of men and even of nations.”

—Acharya Kriplani

Finding none had recommended Nehru, reportedly, Gandhi did tell Nehru: “No PCC has put forward your name...only [a few members of] the Working Committee have [that too at the prodding of Gandhi himself].” Nehru remained pregnantly silent. Despite his grand pretensions of Gandhi as his father figure, and he being his son, chela and follower, Nehru remained silently defiant and let

it be known to Gandhi he would not play second fiddle to anyone.

It has even been claimed that Nehru tried blackmail: he threatened to split the Congress on the issue. It appears that all the “sacrifice” for the nation by Motilal and his son was geared to ultimately grab power for the Nehru dynasty!

Nehru was not without shrewdness or guile; like Franklin D Roosevelt, he had something of the lion and the fox in him and none understood better the mechanics and manipulations of Indian politics.

—Frank Morass

Gandhi was a dictator. He was no democrat. And, it was not as if his dictatorial and undemocratic action did any good for the nation. It actually cost the nation dear. Rather than national interests, Gandhi’s personal bias dominated. Commented Dr Rajendra Prasad: “Gandhi has once again sacrificed his trusted lieutenant for the sake of the glamorous Nehru.”

Gandhi was actually a self-obsessed authoritarian harbouring an overblown self-image, with an inflated ego, believing his all-round quackery represented wide and deep knowledge and wisdom, and that only he knew what was best.

Didn’t Gandhi realise the immorality of his illegal and undemocratic act—and a repeat act at that? Why did he go against the wishes of the overwhelming majority?

The ‘Apostle of Non-Violence’ advocated non-violence as an all-encompassing principle: non-violence was not just in the context of use of force, but also about speech, behaviour, other acts, and so on. Was junking majority-vote not a violence against the voice of the overwhelming majority? How was being dictatorial compatible with the principle of non-violence? Is injustice compatible with non-violence? Was gross repeat injustice to Sardar Patel compatible with the principle of non-violence?

Why Gandhi kept throwing his weight behind Nehru since Nehru’s election as President of the Congress in 1929 (thanks to Gandhi), and kept giving Nehru a leg-up on the far more capable Sardar Patel right through, would remain a mystery! It proved in practice to be a major disservice by Gandhi (though unintentionally) to the nation.

Further, how could Nehru be called a democrat when he so undemocratically usurped the said post? Height of hypocrisy and brazenness was when Nehru grandly commented on his unjust elevation: “I was, for a long time, unable to make up my mind... But, the day before yesterday, I persuaded myself to

shoulder the responsibility on the advice of Mahatmaji and also my colleagues in the Working Committee.”

“My own understanding is that if Sardar Patel had been Prime Minister during that time and not Nehru, India would have gone further and faster.”

—Minoo Masani in ‘Against the Tide’

It cost India heavy to have Nehru in a position that could have been ably handled only by Patel as the President in 1946, and later as PM.

Even after Patel was no more, it should have been Dr Ambedkar or C Rajagopalachari or some other capable person, rather than Nehru at the helm.

Somebody asked Gandhi why he did so. Reportedly, Gandhi’s reason was he wanted both Nehru and Patel together to lead the nation, but while Nehru would not work under Patel, he knew that in the national interest he could persuade Sardar Patel to work under Nehru.

What Gandhi said amounts to this: While Sardar Patel, even though senior and much more experienced, and backed by majority, was patriotic enough to work under Nehru in the national interest, if so prodded by Gandhi; Nehru, junior, less experienced, and not backed by a single PCC, wanted only to become PM, and was not patriotic enough to work under Patel, in the national interest, even if persuaded by Gandhi!

“...[then] it seemed to me that Jawaharlal should be the new President [in 1946—and hence PM] ...I acted according to my best judgement but the way things have shaped since then has made me to realise that this was perhaps the greatest blunder of my political life... My second mistake was that when I decided not to stand myself, I did not support Sardar Patel.”

—Maulana Azad, ‘India Wins Freedom’

Says Kuldip Nayar in ‘Beyond the Lines’:

“[Humayun] Kabir [translator-editor of Maulana Azad's autobiography] believed that Azad had come to realize after seeing Nehru’s functioning that Patel should have been India’s prime minister and Nehru the president of India. Coming as it did from an inveterate opponent of Patel, it was a revelation...A year earlier, Rajagopalachari had said the same thing...”

Blunder-7 : **Cabinet Mission Plan & Nehru's Blunder**

Prime Minister Clement Attlee told the House of Commons on 15 March 1946: "If India elects for independence she has a right to do so." The Raj had, at last, decided to pack up. A British Cabinet Mission comprising three cabinet ministers— Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade, and AV Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty—arrived in India on 23 March 1946 at the initiative of Clement Attlee, the Prime Minister of the UK, to discuss and plan for the Indian independence, and the transfer of power to Indian leadership. Their discussions with the INC (Indian National Congress) and the IML (all-India Muslim League) did not yield a common ground acceptable to both.

So as to make headway, the Cabinet Mission unilaterally proposed a plan ("16 May Cabinet Mission Plan") announced by PM Attlee in the House of Commons on 16 May 1946, which, among other things, stated that Pakistan was no solution for the minority problem.

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Nehru did a blunder at the very start of his Presidency in 1946. After the AICC ratification of the CWC's acceptance of the *May 16 Cabinet Mission Plan*, Nehru remarked at the AICC on 7 July 1946: "We are not bound by a single thing except that we have decided to go into the Constituent Assembly." At a press conference three days later, he declared that the Congress would be "completely unfettered by agreements", and that "the central government was likely to be much stronger than what the Cabinet Mission envisaged." Nehru then made controversial remarks on the grouping proposed.

Jinnah contended with the British that Nehru's remarks amounted to "a complete repudiation" of May 16 Plan, and therefore the British government should accordingly declare that the Congress had not really accepted the May 16 Cabinet Mission Plan. In the absence of any action in that respect from the British government, Jinnah took the extreme step: he got the Muslim League to revoke its acceptance of the May 16 Plan, and gave a sinister call for the launch of "direct action to achieve Pakistan."

Calling for observing 16 August 1946 as Direct Action Day, Jinnah said: "Today we bid goodbye to constitutional methods. Throughout, the British and the Congress held a pistol in their hand, the one of authority and arms and the other of mass struggle and non-cooperation. Today we have also forged a pistol



and are in a position to use it.”

The result was the *Calcutta Carnage*, the *Great Calcutta Killings*, the worst communal riot instigated by the Muslim League, that left 5,000 to 10,000 dead, 15,000 injured, and about one lakh homeless!

Nehru’s indiscretion put paid to the scheme of united India, precipitated Jinnah’s call for Pakistan, and resulted in the ghastly *Direct Action* above. Patel was aghast both by Nehru’s blunder, and by Jinnah’s momentous decision. Patel wrote to DP Mishra: “Though Nehru has been elected (President) for the fourth time, he often acts with childlike innocence... but we must not allow our anger to get the better of ourselves... His Press conference [was an] act of emotional insanity...”

Maulana Azad called Nehru’s act “one of those unfortunate events which change the course of history.”

Maulana Azad confessed in his autobiography, *‘India Wins Freedom’*: “It was a mistake on my part that I did not support Sardar Patel. We differed on many issues but I am convinced that if he had succeeded me as Congress President he would have seen that the Cabinet Mission Plan was successfully implemented. He would have never committed the mistake of Jawaharlal which gave Mr. Jinnah an opportunity of sabotaging the Plan. I can never forgive myself when I think that if I had not committed these mistakes, perhaps the history of the last ten years would have been different.”

### ***Blunder-8 :*** **Making Jews out of Hindu Sindhis**

The home of the oldest civilization in the world—the Indus or Sindhu Valley Civilization—highlighted by the excavations at Mohenjo-daro is Sindh. It dates back to over 7000 BCE. The 3,180 km long Indus or Sindhu River that originates near Lake Mansarovar in the Tibetan Plateau runs through Ladakh, Gilgit-Baltistan, Western Punjab in Pakistan, and merges into the Arabian Sea near the port city of Karachi in Sindh. Sindhu means water in Sanskrit. Name India is derived from Indus. Sindhu river has a number of tributaries: Its left bank tributaries are Zaskar in Ladakh, and Chenab in the plains, which in turn has four major tributaries, namely, Jhelum, Ravi, Beas and Sutlej; and its major right bank tributaries are Shyok, Gilgit, Kabul, Gomol and Kurram. The Indus delta (current Pakistan) is mentioned in the Rig-Veda as Sapta Sindhu (Hapta Hindu in the Iranian Zend Avesta), meaning ‘seven rivers’.

Aryans were indigenous to India, and hence to Sindh. The *Aryan-Invasion Theory* has long since been conclusively debunked. Genetic studies also prove it. Aryan-Dravidian divide was also a deliberate myth floated by the colonists to serve their divide-and-rule and proselytization strategy.

Sindh was part of the empire of Dashrath (father of Shri Ram) during the second Vedic period. After Shri Ram returned from vanvas defeating Ravana, and became king, he gave the responsibility to his brother Bharat to rule Sindh and Multan. Later, Gandhar (Kandahar) came under him. To Bharat’s sons goes the credit of building the cities of Peshawar and Taxila.

Sindh was in good hands till the reign of Harshavardhana who ruled India and Sindh during 606–647 CE, after which it went into weaker hands. Buddhism, which vigorously taught non-violence, and which had its presence in Sindh, too contributed to weakening the defence capabilities. There were several hundred Buddhist Sanghas in Sindh at the time, and many thousand Buddhist monks.

There were 15 attempted invasions of Sindh both from land and from sea between 638 CE and 711 CE, but all were repulsed. Mohammed Bin Qasim finally managed to plunder Sindh in 712 CE. He first attacked Debal, a temple town near sea, in April 712 CE, won it, and then proceeded to defeat the then king of Sindh, Dahir, which he did on 16 June 712 CE. Qasim and his army plundered the riches of Dahir’s territories, and carted away the booty to the court of Hajjaj in Baghdad. Many women were abducted to Baghdad. All males over 17 years who refused to convert to Islam were killed. But, finding there were too

many Hindus to kill, they were granted *Dhimmi* status upon regular payment of Jizya tax.

There is an interesting tale on the death of Mohammed Bin Qasim. As per *Chachnama*, the Sindhi chronicle of the times, Qasim had sent the two daughters of King Dahir as presents to the Khalifa for his harem. To avenge their father's death by Qasim, the daughters lied to the Khalifa that Qasim had violated them before sending them. Enraged, the Khalifa ordered that Qasim be wrapped and stitched in oxen hides, and brought to Syria. That resulted in his death from suffocation. Upon discovering the sisters' subterfuge, the Khalifa then ordered that the sisters be buried alive in a wall.

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Sindh came under the British in 1843, and was included as a part of the Bombay Presidency. At the time of partition Sindh was a British India province. It was bordered by Baluchistan and West Punjab (to the north), and by the Princely States of Bahawalpur (northeast), Las Bela (west), Kalat (west), and Khairpur (east: Sindh province surrounded it from three sides). To its east was Rajasthan, and Gujarat was to its south. As per the census of 1931, Sindh's population was 4.1 million, of which 73% were Muslims, 26% were Hindus, and the remaining 1% were Christians, Sikhs, etc.

Hindus were concentrated in urban areas, while Muslims dominated the countryside. Hindus were in absolute majority in four of Sindh's five largest cities (for example, Hyderabad was 70% Hindu), the exception being Karachi which was about 48% Muslim, 46% Hindu, and the remaining 6% non-Muslims belonged to other religions—there also Muslims were not in absolute majority. Four sub-districts to the southeast—Umarkot, Nagar Parkar, Mithi, and Chachro—adjoining India had Hindu majority of 57%. Several nearby sub-districts too had about 40–45% Hindus. In view of these, Southeast Sindh, plus certain adjoining areas to compensate for Hindu Sindhis leaving other parts of Sindh, could well have been partitioned as Hindu or Indian Sindh to give space and justice to Hindu Sindhis.

But, nothing of the sort was done. Hindu Sindhis were deprived of their

homeland of thousands of years. They became the new Jews, although their history and homeland was much older than those of the Jews and Israel. Why that injustice and neglect? Why Gandhi, Nehru, and other Indian leaders did little for them?

One argument is that the Thar Desert formed a natural boundary between India and Pakistan, and Sindh fell beyond the Thar Desert. That's a reasonable argument if India–Pakistan partition was done taking the natural boundaries into account. But, that was not the case. Where was the natural boundary between East Punjab (India) and West Punjab (Pakistan)? Or, between East Bengal (Pakistan, now Bangladesh) and West Bengal (India)? Or, between J&K (India) and PoK (Pakistan)? If Punjab, Bengal, and J&K could do without a natural border, why not Sindh?

Another argument is not all regions could have been partitioned. Otherwise, why not earmarked areas for Muslims elsewhere too, say in UP? There are several reasons for this. There was NO Muslim-majority district then in UP. Partition was restricted to border areas, and not anywhere within India or within Pakistan. Sindh fell in the border area. Initially, the concept of Pakistan was restricted ONLY to northwest India—it did not even include East Bengal.

When Sindh was included as one of the components of future Pakistan by the League in the 1930s and later, Indian leaders should have objected to the inclusion of whole of Sindh as a Muslim-majority area in Pakistan. They didn't.

As per the “*May 16 [1946] Cabinet Mission Plan*” Provincial Legislatures were to be grouped as under: (A)*Group-A*: Madras, UP, Central provinces, Bombay, Bihar & Orissa. (B)*Group-B*: Punjab, Sindh, NWFP, Baluchistan. (C)*Group-C*: Assam and Bengal.

The intention of the British and the Muslim League was to make Group-B and Group-C Muslim-majority, and ultimately create Pakistan out of them, leaving only Group-A for India. Nehru had surprisingly expressed approval for the groupings, although many Congress leaders opposed it. However, as it transpired, despite the groupings, Assam was kept out on account of its Hindu majority, and Punjab and Bengal were partitioned. That being the logic, why was Sindh, grouped with Punjab in Group-B, not partitioned?

Apparently, Nehru and the Congress would perhaps have taken notice if like the Sikhs and Hindus of Punjab, Hindu Sindhis too had resorted to violence.

A related case was of Khairpur. Khairpur was a Princely State adjoining India on the east, and surrounded on the other three sides by Sindh. Its Mir had offered

to Nehru its merger with India. But, the offer was declined by Nehru, and India sent their accession papers back to them! Had the offer been accepted, Khairpur plus the adjoining Hindu-majority area could have been Hindu or Indian Sindh.

Blunder-9 :
Pre-Independence Nepotism & Dynasty Promotion

Jawaharlal Nehru's dynastic tendencies, inherited from his father Motilal, were apparent in the 1930s itself, much before he became the prime minister and brazenly and nepotistically promoted his daughter, and established his dynasty.

After the 1937 elections when the ministry was being formed in UP, Govind Ballabh Pant, who became the Chief Minister, and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai proposed to Nehru inclusion of Mrs Vijaylakshmi Pandit [Nehru's sister] in the ministry, which Nehru readily agreed.

Why did they do so? Not because they considered Vijaylakshmi competent! But, by doing so, they hoped to receive Nehru's favour, and hoped to save themselves from unnecessary interference and outbursts of Nehru!

On Vijaylakshmi Pandit, there is an episode of the time Nehru was head of the Interim Government in 1946, as written by Stanley Wolpert in his book, 'Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny': "Liaquat Ali Khan and Nehru almost came to blows in the interim government's cabinet, when Nehru named his sister Nan [Vijaylakshmi Pandit] as India's first ambassador to Moscow. Liaquat was livid at such autocratic blatant nepotism, but his protests fell on deaf ears. Nehru yelled louder and threatened to resign immediately if Dickie [Mountbatten] supported Liaquat in the matter."

Indira Gandhi was yet too young for Nehru to promote her at that stage.

Integration of Princely States

Blunder-10 :

Independent India dependent upon the British!

God only knows why India chose to appoint Mountbatten, a British, as the Governor General (GG) of India after independence! Jinnah didn't do that blunder—he himself became the GG of Pakistan. Why Gandhi always shirked responsibilities, not taking any official positions? He could have become the GG. Or, made another Indian the GG.

Mountbatten was a representative of Britain, and it was natural for him, rather, expected of him, to safeguard and promote the interests of Britain; and keeping British Government informed of the goings on, including confidential matters.

Sarila points out in 'The Shadow of the Great Game': "Another factor that distinctly influenced the situation was Nehru's offer to Mountbatten to chair the Defence Committee of the Indian Cabinet. It was this committee and not the Indian Cabinet as a whole that made decisions on Kashmir war policy. This power gave the governor-general enormous power to influence the course of fighting."

Britain wanted Kashmir, a strategic territory, to be under their influence. That was possible if it was either independent or with Pakistan, which was pro-West. Towards this aim, Mountbatten ensured that as GG he did not remain just a titular head. He manipulated to get himself appointed as '*Head of the Defence Committee of India*' ensuring that C-in-C of both the Indian and the Pakistani Army and the Supreme Commander, Auchinleck, reported to him. In that capacity, Mountbatten secretly co-ordinated with the transitional British Commander-in-Chief of the Pakistan Army; had private strategy sessions with the transitional British C-in-C of the Indian Army, without the knowledge of the Indian leaders; and manipulated to the extent feasible, decisions and actions in the direction the British Government wanted.

In case the Indian leaders felt that having a British GG, and a British C-in-C, did help in some way, they should have accounted for the fact that it could also be counter-productive in certain cases—and it did prove to be so. Their basic allegiance being to Britain, between them, these British were able to manipulate matters—many contrary to the interests of India.

The role of Mountbatten in the integration of the three states that created problems—Junagadh, Hyderabad and J&K—was dubious. Where the British

interests were not affected—in respect of the other Princely States—he did try to help India. But, where the British interests clashed with the Indian interests, he helped the British interests. Mountbatten attempted to also refer the Junagadh and the Hyderabad cases to the UN. Fortunately, they were firmly rejected by Sardar Patel. British did all that was possible to prevent Indian army action in Hyderabad.

Nehru was mainly responsible for having Mountbatten appointed as the GG of independent India; and was perhaps the only factor in making him the Head of the Defence Committee.

Wrote Durga Das in 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After': "...Patel added that Nehru was unduly amenable to Mountbatten's influence. Nehru had 'always leaned on someone'. He was under Bapu's protective wing and 'now he leans on Mountbatten'."

Was Edwina's influence on Nehru also a factor? Maulana Azad, a pro-Nehru person, expresses bewilderment in his autobiography as to how a person like Jawaharlal was won over by Lord Mountbatten; mentions Nehru's weakness of being impulsive and amenable to personal influences, and wonders if the Lady Mountbatten factor was responsible.

Blunder-11 :
Refusing J&K Accession when Offered

Maharaja Hari Singh had first offered J&K's accession to India in September 1947. Had the accession been accepted, the Indian army could have been deployed in Kashmir well in advance of the invasion by the Pakistani-raiders, preventing both the creation of the PoK, and the terrible tragedy of loot, killings and rapes.

Inexplicably, Nehru refused the accession! He first wanted Sheikh Abdullah to be freed and installed as the prime minister of the State. That was not acceptable to the Maharaja. *Was it not queer? Rather than the state agreeing to merge, it was the nation being favoured with accession that was laying down conditions! Absurdity unlimited!* But, that was Nehru!!

In sharp contrast you had Jinnah offering a signed blank sheet along with his own fountain pen to Maharajas of Jodhpur, Jaisalmer, and Bikaner to put down their conditions for accession to Pakistan, saying: *"You can fill in all your conditions."*

States Narendra Singh Sarila in 'The Shadow of the Great Game': "Mountbatten added: 'He [Patel] has also attacked Nehru for the first time saying *"I regret our leader has followed the lofty ideas [Lofty or silly! And, certainly against the national interests.] into the skies and has no contact left with earth or reality"*'...This outburst probably reflected Patel's frustration with Nehru at the time, for refusing to accept the Maharaja of Kashmir's accession to India unless and until a government under Sheikh Abdullah was installed."

It was undemocratic and irresponsible of Nehru, and an illegal act, not to have obtained the concurrence of the cabinet before taking such a major decision of not accepting J&K accession. It is quite likely that Mountbatten had dissuaded him from accepting accession, as the British wanted J&K to accede to Pakistan.

Blunder–12: **Allowing Kashmir to be almost Lost**

The Pakistani raiders were almost on the outskirts of Srinagar by 22 October 1947, and Maharaja desperately sought help. Looking to the precarious situation, Sardar Patel proposed sending the Indian Army to J&K.

However, Mountbatten insisted that unless the *Instrument of Accession* was signed by J&K in favour of India (the offer earlier refused by Nehru, most likely at the instance of Mountbatten himself!), India should not send army to Kashmir, and Nehru concurred.

On Friday, 24 October 1947, the Pakistani raiders attacked the Mohore Power House causing black out in Srinagar.

Defence Committee of India, headed by Mountbatten, met the next morning on Saturday, 25 October 1947, and rather than ordering action to save Srinagar, directed VP Menon, Sam Manekshaw and a few senior military officers to fly to Srinagar the same day to check the position first hand. Why shouldn't Nehru as head of the government have insisted on immediate relief for Kashmir?

This was actually a deliberate ploy of Mountbatten to pass time and not allow counter-action by India, and let Pakistan gain an upper hand by force, as the British desired—because Mountbatten would have known through the British C-in-C of the Pakistani army as to what Pakistan was up to.

VP Menon and company flew to Srinagar and found the state of affairs to be worse than what was reported. They advised Hari Singh to hurry to the safety of Jammu. MC Mahajan, the premier of J&K, VP Menon, Sam Manekshaw, and colleagues returned to Delhi from Srinagar early next morning on Sunday, 26 October 1947, and reported the desperate situation to the Defence Committee.

They advised that it would not be possible to save Srinagar and its people unless the troops were immediately air-lifted. Even the Srinagar air-strip was in danger of being imminently occupied by the raiders, in which case even that only possibility of air-lifting troops would close.

Notwithstanding the desperate situation, and knowing that unless help was sent immediately, both the Muslims and the Pandits of Srinagar would be butchered by the Pakistani raiders, and the Valley of Kashmir would be lost to Pakistan, Mountbatten still insisted that the *Instrument of Accession* be first signed in favour of India. Nehru simply went along with his guru Mountbatten.

It didn't seem illegal to Mountbatten and Nehru that the raiders backed by the

Pakistani army should invade J&K, which had not signed any *Instrument of Accession* in Pakistan's favour; but it seemed illegal to them to send Indian army help to save people getting looted, raped and butchered!

As desired, VP Menon flew to Jammu the same day—Sunday, 26 October 1947—to have the *Instrument of Accession* signed by Hari Singh, which he did.

The *Instrument of Accession* signed by Hari Singh on 26 October 1947, and brought back by VP Menon, was accepted by Mountbatten on 27 October 1947. With the signing of the *Instrument* and its acceptance, J&K legally became a part of India, and it became incumbent upon India to defend its territory, send in its army and throw out the raiders.

Yet, in the Defence Committee meeting held on Monday, 27 October 1947, Mountbatten—serving the pro-Pakistani British interests—tried to stall sending the Indian army, saying it was too late, raiders being already at the door of Srinagar. But, who made it late in the first place—Mountbatten himself! As usual, Nehru prevaricated. Even when the need for action could not be postponed any further, Mountbatten threw his weight against any precipitate action, and the service chiefs [all British] backed him. They all sought to dissuade Nehru and other Indian leaders from an airlift on the grounds that it involved great risks and dangers.

Sardar Patel finally intervened. Recounted Sam Manekshaw, who later became the first Field Marshal in the Indian army:

“At the morning meeting he [VP Menon/Patel] handed over the (*Accession*) thing. Mountbatten turned around and said, ‘come on Manekji (He called me Manekji instead of Manekshaw), what is the military situation?’ I gave him the military situation, and told him that unless we flew in troops immediately, we would have lost Srinagar, because going by road would take days, and once the tribesmen got to the airport and Srinagar, we couldn't fly troops in. Everything was ready at the airport. *As usual Nehru talked about the United Nations, Russia, Africa, God almighty, everybody, until Sardar Patel lost his temper.* He said, ‘Jawaharlal, do you want Kashmir, or do you want to give it away.’ He [Nehru] said, ‘Of course, I want Kashmir.’ Then he [Patel] said ‘Please give your orders.’ And before he could say anything Sardar Patel turned to me and said, ‘You have got your orders.’ I walked out, and we started flying in troops...”

Had Sardar Patel not acted, and had it been left to Nehru and Mountbatten, the whole of Kashmir would have been lost to Pakistan.

Sardar Patel made his first visit to Srinagar around 3 November 1947.

Commented pro-Nehru and anti-Patel Sheikh Abdullah: “Events took a decisive turn after Patel’s visit. The Sardar did not lose even one minute. He studied the situation and said that the enemy must be driven back.”

Blunder-13 :
Unconditional J&K Accession Made Conditional

Was the 'Instrument of Accession' signed by Maharaja Hari Singh for J&K different from other Princely States, and did it incorporate some special provisions? NO.

The Instrument of Accession was standard and common for all Princely States. There was no provision in it for any ruler to add or subtract conditions. It was required to be signed unchanged.

With regard to J&K, it is worth re-emphasising that (a)the Instrument of Accession signed was no different from those signed by the other Princely States; (b)it was signed by Hari Singh unconditionally; and (c)it was accepted by the Governor General, Lord Mountbatten, unconditionally. That is, the whole process was no different from the one that applied to the other 547 Princely States that acceded to India.

Through a separate letter, however, Mountbatten advised Maharaja Hari Singh that the accession was subject to reference to the people of J&K. The Maharaja had put no such condition.

In fact, even Sheikh Abdullah, who had favoured accession to India, never insisted on this condition—rather, he wanted it to be unconditional, lest any uncertainty should remain.

It was Mountbatten who wrote a separate letter to Hari Singh advising that the accession was temporary, and was conditional upon ascertaining the wishes of the people of Kashmir.

Who gave Mountbatten the authority to write such a letter? Who was he to make the accession conditional? Was he still the Viceroy of the British India serving the British interests, or was he the Governor General of independent India? Why did Nehru not object?

Why had the Indian leaders, particularly Nehru, not made it clear to him that he could not act on his own on critical matters—that he had to take the permission of the cabinet? When the other 547 states acceded to India, did he write such a letter to each of them or put this condition?

One can understand conditions being stipulated by the party offering you the favour of accession. That is, the Maharaja stipulating conditions for his accession to India—however, he stipulated no conditions! But, for the party being favoured with accession to stipulate conditions—that's absurd! Why

should India have put conditions upon J&K for its accession? Was India doing a favour to J&K for allowing it to accede to India?

Had it been a Governor General who was an Indian like say Dr Ambedkar or Dr Rajendra Prasad or Rajagopalachari or Mahatma Gandhi (Wonder why he didn't wish to take on any official responsibility after independence, and leave the top post to a British!) himself, and not a British like Mountbatten, would he have tried to make the accession conditional? And, had he done so, would the Indian public have ever forgiven him?

Or, was it that Nehru acquiesced to writing of such a letter by Mountbatten? (—yet another blunder?) Even if the deed was done without Nehru's knowledge (unlikely), Nehru should have objected to it and should have got it annulled or withdrawn.

However, that separate letter of Mountbatten certainly did NOT make the Instrument of Accession conditional, because there was no provision in the Instrument for any conditions. Signing of the Instrument and its acceptance by the then Indian governor-general made the accession of J&K full, final and irrevocable.

India should have stuck to this incontestable legal position of the irrevocable accession of J&K to India, like for the other 547 states, on the strength of the signing of the Instrument of Accession. Even US considered ours as an ironclad legal position in 1948. However, Mountbatten and Nehru spoiled the case.

Blunder-14 : **Internationalisation of the Kashmir Issue**

Nehru single-handedly created the J&K problem (guided by, and at the prodding of Lord Mountbatten), and rather than solving it, made it more complicated. The problem still bedevils us and costs us tremendously in money, material and men.

He unnecessarily internationalised what was purely an internal issue by taking it to the UN, again under the influence of the British Mountbatten.

Writes V Shankar in ‘My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel, Volume 1’: *“Lord Mountbatten persuaded Pandit Nehru to make a broadcast in which he was to announce that the accession would be subject to a plebiscite under the UN auspices.* This was scheduled at 8.30pm on 28 October. Sardar used to insist on seeing the texts of important broadcasts including those of the prime minister. Pandit Nehru had a very busy day and could not send the text before 8.15pm. Sardar read it and noticed the embarrassing commitment. He tried to contact Pandit Nehru but the latter had left for the Broadcasting House. Sardar then commissioned me to go to the Broadcasting House and ask Pandit Nehru to delete the offending phrase ‘under UN auspices’...” However, by the time Shankar reached the place, the Mountbatten-inspired deed was done by Nehru.

It was imprudent, illegal, and totally undemocratic on the part of Nehru to have made this commitment of “plebiscite under UN auspices” at the instance of a British, Lord Mountbatten, having his own axe to grind, without taking the Indian Cabinet into confidence!

Wrote the veteran Congressman DP Mishra: “...Soon after, I heard Nehru’s voice on All India Radio at Nagpur, committing the Government of India to the holding of plebiscite in Kashmir. As from my talk with Patel, I had received the impression that the signature of the Maharaja had finally settled the Kashmir issue. I was surprised by Nehru’s announcement. When I visited Delhi next, I pointedly asked Patel whether the decision to hold a plebiscite in Kashmir was taken at a meeting of the Cabinet. He sighed and shook his head. It was evident that Nehru had acted on Mountbatten’s advice, and had ignored his colleagues.”

It seems that Nehru, the claimed expert on international affairs, was innocent about the functioning of the UNSC—UN Security Council. He was apparently under the impression that UNSC functioned on the basis of the high ideals enshrined in the UN Charter and looked to the merits of the cases referred to it. That the member-nations of the UNSC acted in their own selfish national

interests and engaged in power-game was apparently not known to the foreign-affairs expert Nehru.

Reference to the UN was something Sardar Patel, Dr Ambedkar and others were against, however, Nehru again went ahead with it publicly in his radio broadcast on 2 November 1947. Incidentally, plebiscite was held in Junagadh also, but it was conducted by India itself on 20 February 1948, managed by an Indian ICS officer, CB Nagarkar—as arranged by Sardar Patel.

Despite sane advice, Nehru scored a self-goal for India by formally referring the J&K matter to the UN on 1 January 1948. With the issue internationalised, India suffered greatly, both domestically and internationally. It became like the sword of Damocles. And continues to be so! The UK, the US and their allies, led by the UK, began playing politics of favouring Pakistan over India, ignoring the fact of Pakistani aggression in J&K.

As usual, Nehru himself realised his blunder after the act. Nehru regretted the Kashmir issue “has been raised to an international level... by reference to the Security Council of the UN and most of the great powers are intensely interested in what happens in Kashmir... [Kashmir issue] has given us a great deal of trouble... the attitude of the great powers has been astonishing. Some of them have shown active partisanship for Pakistan... We feel we have not been given a square deal.”

Blunder-15 :
Inept Handling of the J&K Issue in the UN

India and Pakistan presented their cases at the UN. The Indian case in the UN was very ineptly presented in January, 1948 by Gopalaswami Aiyangar, Minister for Kashmir Affairs, specifically appointed for the purpose by Nehru in his cabinet.

Sardar Patel was opposed to Gopalaswami Aiyangar leading the team. He considered him to be not competent enough. Patel had instead suggested CP Ramaswami Iyer, aka just CP—a very competent intellectual, statesman and diplomat, with many foreign contacts in the UK and the US. But, Nehru ignored Patel's advice.

Quipped Chaudhury Sir Muhammad Zafrullah Khan (1893-1985), the Pakistani representative in the UN, when he learnt that India's representative was Aiyangar: "You are offering me Kashmir on a platter."

Here is a tell-tale description of what happened in the UN. It is from the book 'Sir CP Remembered' by Shakunthala Jagannathan:

"I was a student living in New York, when the question of Kashmir came up in the U.N. Accompanied by several Indian and American friends, I attended the Security council session, oozing with confidence on India's stand. First came Sir Zafrullah Khan's impassioned and brilliant speech on behalf of Pakistan which was powerful enough to shake up our confidence.

"When he sat down, we Indians breathed a sigh of relief. The Indian delegation was then asked to present their case. The delegate concerned [Gopalaswami Aiyangar] put up his hand, stood up, and said, 'I protest!'... We had expected that our case, so much stronger, would shake up the U.N.! Instead our presentation on that day resulted in a debacle, right before our eyes..."

It is worth noting that Zafrullah Khan had an illustrious career. Educated at London's King's College, he was the foreign minister of Pakistan (1947-54), the president for the UN General Assembly (1962), and the judge (1954-61, 1964-73), vice-president (1958-61) and the president (1970-73) of the International Court of Justice. He sat on the British Viceroy's Executive Council as its Muslim member between 1935 and 1941. He represented India at the League of Nations in Geneva in 1939. He was the Agent-General of British India to China in 1942.

Gopalaswami Aiyangar, chosen by Nehru (and opposed by Sardar Patel), was no match for Zafrullah Khan. Expectedly, while Zafrullah Khan's presentation was brilliant, and received all-round praise, that of Aiyangar's was an

unmitigated disaster!

Yet another wrong choice of Nehru was to include Sheikh Abdullah in the Indian delegation. Writes Howard B. Schaffer in his book, 'The Limits of Influence—America's Role in Kashmir': "The Indians had made Abdullah a member of their UN delegation, no doubt in the expectation that he would be an effective spokesman for India's cause. They could not have calculated that he would undercut their position by calling for Kashmir's independence in a private conversation with Austin. Apparently caught by surprise, the ambassador gave Abdullah no encouragement..." Warren R. Austin was the US permanent representative to the UN.

Nehru's initial blunder was to take an internal, domestic matter of India to the UN, and make it international. However, having referred the matter to the UN, it was expected of the international-affairs-expert Nehru to put his best foot forward, and win the case for India. Unfortunately for India, Nehru obliged Pakistan with a follow-up blunder: appointing an incompetent to present India's case!

Blunder-16 : **PoK thanks to Nehru**

It was thanks to Nehru's wrong decision that *Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK)* came into existence, when the Indian army was on the verge of getting the whole of J&K vacated.

The military commanders directly involved in the operations of clearing J&K from the raiders and the Pak-army were KM Cariappa, the General Officer C-in-C, Western Command, and Major-General Thimayya, the operational commander. As per the biography of late Field Marshal Cariappa, they both requested Nehru for a little more time to clear J&K completely, but to no avail. Thimayya told Nehru the Army needed two weeks more to regain lost territory but Nehru was adamant.

It is said that Thimayya found Nehru's attitude inexplicable, and left Teen Murti Bhavan, the official residence of the PM, in disgust.

The capture of Muzzafarabad, now the capital of PoK, was imminent. The Army, however, was ordered to suspend all offensive operations with effect from 1 January 1949, even though the enemy did not cease fighting. The Indian Army was very disappointed by the decision, but orders were orders. Thanks to ordering of ceasefire with immediate effect by Nehru, Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) came into existence; else the whole of Kashmir would have been with India.

When Cariappa asked Nehru about the decision a few years later, Nehru conceded that the ceasefire order ought to have been delayed!

Britain had marked out two areas that had to absolutely go to Pakistan—despite J&K accession to India. One was the northern area along the Chinese, Russian and Afghanistan borders comprising Gilgit, Hunza, Nagar, Swat and Chitral. This area commanded as much strategic importance to Britain and the West as NWFP in Pakistan. Mountbatten had ensured NWFP went to Pakistan, even though its leader, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was opposed to the partition of India. The other area was the western strip adjoining Pakistani Punjab to secure Pakistan from India, comprising Muzzafarabad, Mirpur, Bhimbar, Kotli and adjoining areas. Muzzafarabad is now the capital of PoK. What the British had planned, they managed to achieve—thanks to the way Nehru acted, or failed to act.

I am afraid Nehru is responsible for the prolongation of the problem through

his willingness to compromise at every stage. Had Vallabhbhai [Patel] been the man to handle the Kashmir question, he would have settled it long ago. At least, he would never have settled with a partial control of Jammu & Kashmir. He would have occupied the whole of the State and would never have allowed it to be elevated to international importance.

—NV Gadgil, a Minister in the Nehru Cabinet

After J&K acceded to India on 26 October 1947, Major William Brown of the Gilgit Scouts, although a British contract officer of the Maharaja of J&K, had the Governor Ghansara Singh imprisoned on 31 October 1947, as per a pre-meditated plan, and hoisted the Pakistani flag there on 2 November 1947, and declared its accession to Pakistan! Major Khurshid Anwar was one of the Pakistani army officers who had organised and lead the Pakistani Pathan tribal invasion of J&K. His deputy, Major Aslam Khan, took charge of Gilgit from Brown. In 1948, Brown was honoured with the “*Most Exalted Order of the British Empire*”.

This was totally an illegal action on the part of the British meant to deliberately deny India access to Central Asia. Mountbatten would surely have known of the goings on, but did nothing, or rather, allowed the illegality to quietly happen.

Blunder-17 :
Nehru's Shocking Callousness in J&K

Here is an account of a Hindu survivor who was a witness to the Mirpur tragedy in J&K in 1947:

“On November 23 [1947], Prem Nath Dogra and Professor Balraj Madhok met Brigadier Paranjape, the Brigade Commander of the Indian Army in Jammu, and requested him to send reinforcements to Mirpur [a strategic place where more than one hundred thousand Hindus and Sikhs were held up during the first Pakistani aggression over Kashmir]. Paranjape shared their agony but expressed his helplessness because—as per instructions from the army generals—consultation with Sheikh Abdullah was mandatory in order to deploy Indian troops anywhere in Jammu and Kashmir. Paranjape also informed the delegation that Pandit Nehru would come to Srinagar on November 24 [1947] and they should meet him.

“On November 24, Pandit Dogra and Professor Madhok met Nehru and once again told him about the critical situation in Mirpur. They requested him to order immediate Indian troops reinforcement to the beleaguered Mirpur City.

“Professor Madhok was amazed at Pandit Nehru's response—Pandit Nehru flew into a rage and yelled that they should talk to Sheikh Abdullah. Prof Madhok again told Pandit Nehru that Sheikh Abdullah was indifferent to the plight of the Jammu province and only Pandit Nehru could save the people of Mirpur. However, Pandit Nehru ignored all their entreaties and did not send any reinforcements to Mirpur.”

(Source: <http://swarajyamag.com/columns/balraj-madhok-1920-2016-gave-us-definition-of-indianisation>)

Mirpur later fell to Pakistani artillery, and became part of PoK. The Hindus and Sikhs encountered a genocide, and worst orgies of rape and barbarity.

Blunder-18 :
Article-370 thanks to Nehru

Article-370 on J&K is thanks to Nehru, who brought it about at the instance of Sheikh Abdullah, despite opposition by many, including Dr BR Ambedkar and Sardar Patel.

Nehru had brought in Gopalaswami Ayyangar as a Minister without Portfolio to look after the J&K affairs, snatching the responsibility from Sardar Patel who was in-charge of the States Department. Before his visit to Europe, Nehru had finalised the draft provisions relating to J&K with Sheikh Abdullah, which later became Article 370. He had entrusted to Gopalaswami the task of piloting these provisions through the Constituent Assembly, which he did. His presentation provoked angry protests from all sides. Most were opposed to any discriminatory treatment for J&K. The proposal of Article 370 was torn to pieces by the Constituent Assembly. Ayyangar was the lone defender, and Maulana Azad was not able to effectively support him.

Mr Abdullah, you want that India should defend Kashmir, India should develop Kashmir and Kashmiris should have equal rights as the citizens of India, but you don't want India and any citizen of India to have any rights in Kashmir. I am the Law minister of India. I cannot betray the interest of my country.

—Dr BR Ambedkar to Sheikh Abdullah, who was sent by Nehru to him to explain the position and to draft an appropriate Article for the Constitution:

Patel confided to his secretary, V Shankar, on Article-370: “*Jawaharlal royega* [Nehru will regret this].”

Why were such special provisions allowed? Couldn't they have been blocked by the Constituent Assembly? But, thanks to Nehru, they were not blocked. In the debate in the Constituent Assembly, Maulana Hasrat Mohani of UP stated that while he was not opposed to all the concessions that were being granted to his friend Sheikh Abdullah, why make such discrimination; if all those concessions were to be granted to Kashmir, why not to the Baroda ruler too.

Interestingly, poor Maharaja Hari Singh of J&K was already out of the picture. Special provisions or no special provisions—he stood neither to gain nor to lose. It was Abdullah, who after getting rid of the Maharaja, was trying to secure and upgrade his status; and Nehru was so bereft of foresight and so unwise in factoring-in its adverse effects that he allowed it.

Nehru made a highly improper statement on Kashmir in 1952, when Sardar Patel was no more: “Sardar Patel was all the time dealing with these matters.” Gopalaswami Ayyangar, dismayed by the incorrect statement, confided to V Shankar, “It is an ill return to the Sardar for the magnanimity he had shown in accepting Panditji’s point of view against his better judgment.”

Jagmohan, who had also been Governor of J&K, writes in his book, ‘My Frozen Turbulence in Kashmir’: “Article 370 is nothing but a feeding ground for the parasites at the heart of paradise. It skins the poor. It deceives them with its mirage. It lines the pockets of the ‘power elites’. It fans the ego of the new ‘sultans’. In essence, it creates a land without justice...It suffocates the very idea of India and fogs the vision of a great social and cultural crucible from Kashmir to Kanyakumari...Over the years, Article 370 has become an instrument of exploitation at the hands of the ruling political elites and other vested interests in bureaucracy, business, the judiciary and bar...It breeds separatist forces which in turn sustain and strengthen Article 370. Apart from politicians, the richer classes have found it convenient to amass wealth and not allow healthy financial legislation to come to the State. The provisions of the Wealth Tax and other beneficial laws of the Union have not been allowed to operate in the State under the cover of Article 370...”

Blunder-19 : **Blood Brother who Deceived**

One of the critical players in the J&K saga was Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, born in 1905 in Soura, a village on the outskirts of Srinagar. He became famous as Sher-e-Kashmir: the Lion of Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah's father was Sheikh Mohammed Ibrahim, a middle class manufacturer and trader of shawls. Sheikh Abdullah's grandfather was a Hindu Kashmiri Pandit by the name of Ragho Ram Koul, who was converted to Islam in 1890 and was named Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, the name his grandson took.

Sheikh Abdullah did MSc in Chemistry from Aligarh Muslim University in 1930. It was at the University that he became politically active. He formed the Muslim Conference, Kashmir's first political party, in 1932, and later renamed it to National Conference in 1938. The Muslim Conference founded by Sheikh Abdullah was communal: he later changed its name to National Conference only for tactical reasons. Sheikh Abdullah was a protagonist of Kashmiri nationalism linked to Islam; and his role model was Dr Mohammad Iqbal, a scion of another Kashmiri Pundit convert to Islam—like himself—who propounded the ideology of Pakistan way back in 1930.

Sheikh Abdullah had endeared himself to Nehru—who had called him my blood-brother—and others by projecting an anti-feudal, democratic, leftist, pro-India, pro-Congress, and above all, a secular image: perhaps to get Maharaja Hari Singh out of the way, and then to sit in his place; for his later actions belied that image, and disappointed and shocked the gullible Nehru.

Sheikh Abdullah launched the Quit Kashmir agitation against the Maharajah in May 1946 leading to his arrest. *Quit Kashmir*, fashioned after *Quit India* was obviously misleading, for Maharaja Hari Singh, unlike the English, was not an outsider. Acharya Kriplani, who visited Kashmir in May 1946, stated that he was convinced that the *Quit Kashmir* movement was abusive and mischievous. Yet, Nehru supported Abdullah. Sheikh Abdullah was sentenced to three years imprisonment. In June 1946, Nehru decided to go to the Valley to free Abdullah. Though prohibited to enter the State, Nehru decided to defy the ban. He proclaimed that he wanted to take on the autocratic and the feudal rule that prevailed in Kashmir.

To have reposed such blind faith in Sheikh Abdullah and in his capability to deliver, grossly overestimating his popularity, and remaining innocently unsuspecting of his intentions, even to the extent of being unfair, unjust and

insulting to the Maharaja, reflected negatively on the expected leader-like qualities from Nehru, who, with his spate of blunders, was rapidly establishing himself as the '*Nabob of Cluelessness*'.

Maharaja Hari Singh had decided in September 1947 to offer Kashmir's accession to India. But it was refused by Nehru, who first wanted Sheikh Abdullah to be freed and installed as the prime minister of the State—something not acceptable to the Maharaja. Was it not queer? The nation being favoured with accession laying down conditions, rather than the state agreeing to merge!

Sheikh Abdullah was made 'Head of the Emergency Administration' in J&K on 30 October 1947 by Maharaja Hari Singh at the instance of Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi. He took oath as Prime Minister of Kashmir on 17 March 1948. He was accused of rigging elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1951. He was dismissed as Prime Minister on 8 August 1953, and was arrested and later jailed for eleven years upon being accused of conspiracy against the State in what came to be known as the 'Kashmir Conspiracy Case'. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed was appointed in his place. Sheikh Abdullah was released on 8 April 1964. Nehru passed away on 27 May 1964. Sheikh Abdullah was later interned from 1965 to 1968. He was exiled from Kashmir in 1971 for 18 months. Consequent to the Indira-Sheikh Accord of 1974, he became the Chief Minister of J&K and remained in that position till his death in 1982.

There is a strange irony between the words and the deeds of Sheikh Abdullah and also his mentor, Nehru. Abdullah impressed Nehru with his stated democratic credentials and railed against feudalism, the Maharaja and the dynasty; but once in power himself, he ensured continuance of his own dynasty! Same with Nehru, who most vociferously railed against the Indian Princely Order and feudalism, but once in power, ensured continuance of his own dynasty!

This is what BN Mullik, who was the then Deputy Director of the IB (Intelligence Bureau) with charge of Kashmir, and later head of the IB, wrote in his book, 'My Years with Nehru': "He [Sardar Patel] suspected that Sheikh [Abdullah] was not genuine and was misleading Pandit Nehru... *He [Patel] apprehended that Sheikh Abdullah would ultimately let down India and Jawaharlal Nehru, and would come out in his real colours...* Events, as they turned out subsequently, proved that the Sardar was right and I was not. Within three years we found ourselves fighting against Sheikh Abdullah. Sardar Patel was dead by then... *Probably things would not have come to this pass at all if*

Sardar was still alive, because Sheikh Abdullah had a very wholesome respect and fear of him.”

Writes Howard B. Schaffer in his book, *The Limits of Influence—America’s Role in Kashmir*, published by Penguin/Viking: “*The Indians had made Abdullah a member of their UN delegation, no doubt in the expectation that he would be an effective spokesman for India’s cause. They could not have calculated that he would undercut their position by calling for Kashmir’s independence in a private conversation with Austin. Apparently caught by surprise, the ambassador gave Abdullah no encouragement...*” Incidentally, Warren R. Austin was the US permanent representative—their ambassador—to the UN.

Blunder-20 :
Wanting Maharaja to Lick his Boots

Let's pose a counterfactual: If only Hari Singh had signed the *Instrument of Accession* earlier! Why did Maharaja Hari Singh vacillate?

It is true that had Maharaja Hari Singh signed the Instrument of Accession earlier, that is, before independence, or by 31 August 1947, perhaps the J&K issue would not have erupted at all. But, you never know. Pakistan would have still created problems. And it certainly had strong backing of Britain and Mountbatten. However, let us try to understand why he signed belatedly.

After his election as the Congress president in 1946, Nehru gave his full support to Sheikh Abdullah, whom he called his *blood brother*. Abdullah launched the *Quit Kashmir* agitation against the Maharajah in May 1946 leading to his arrest. *Quit Kashmir*, fashioned after *Quit India* was obviously misleading, for Maharaja Hari Singh, unlike the English, was not an outsider. Kriplani, who visited Kashmir in May 1946, stated that he was convinced that the Quit Kashmir movement was abusive and mischievous. Abdullah was sentenced to three years imprisonment.

In June 1946, Nehru decided to go to the Valley to free Abdullah. Though prohibited to enter the State, Nehru decided to defy the ban. He proclaimed that he wanted to take on the autocratic and the feudal rule that prevailed in Kashmir. Autocratic and feudal rule prevailed in the other 547 Princely States too that ultimately merged with India: Did Nehru go to any of those 547 states to similarly protest? Nehru did not seem to realise that the support of the princes and their collaboration would be indispensable in the coming months for persuading them to accede to India. To take on the Maharaja at that stage, and that too as Congress president, did not appear to be politically wise. Sardar Patel and others tried to dissuade him, yet he went.

He [Nehru] has done many things recently which have caused us great embarrassment. His actions in Kashmir...are acts of emotional insanity and it puts tremendous strain on us to set the matters right.

—Sardar Patel wrote to DP Mishra

Even Gandhi, when he went for his only visit to Kashmir in 1947, pointedly rejected the hospitality of the Maharaja, and remained the guest of the National Conference of Abdullah.

Rebuffed thus by Gandhi, having been consistently rubbed the wrong way,

experiencing the hostility of Nehru towards him over the last many months, and watching the commitment being shown to his arch enemy, Abdullah, why Hari Singh, anybody in his place—Nehru himself, were he in Maharaja's shoes—would have hesitated to accede to India.

Hari Singh calculated that he only stood to lose by joining India, and that he would have no future with Nehru and Gandhi at the helm. Pakistan he surely did not wish to join. But the Maharaja certainly did not relish the insistence from Nehru (when Maharaja offered accession in September 1947) to first hand over power to Sheikh Abdullah—as if he were some foreign power who should hand over power to a native. So, the Maharaja started considering his option for independence, which was legally permissible. Incidentally, while Pakistan had signed Standstill Agreement (status quo) with J&K; India did not sign it, even though offered. Why?

If Nehru had dealt with Hari Singh wisely looking to the political options, like Sardar Patel had done in respect of all the Princely States, had Nehru not allowed his personal bias to dominate, had Nehru accommodated Maharaja suitably, had Nehru convinced him that his interests would be suitably protected if he joined India, Hari Singh may not have dithered and would have signed the *Instrument of Accession* well before 15 August 1947; and J&K would never have been an issue at all!

To be anti-Maharaja was imprudent given the situation. Nehru should have tackled Hari Singh like Sardar Patel tackled the other 547 rajas and maharajas. However, Nehru, rather than giving a sympathetic hearing to Maharaja, and tackling him in a way that could lead to a favourable decision, appeared to be vindictive.

Mountbatten was reported to have remarked about Nehru: “*I thought he [Nehru] wanted to make the Maharaja lick his boots...*”

States V Shankar in his book, ‘My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel’: “...Pandit Nehru regarded it as axiomatic that only Sheikh Abdullah could deliver the goods and was prepared to make any concessions to him to seek his support... Sardar did not trust Sheikh nor did he share Pandit Nehru's assessment of his influence in the State. He felt that our case in Jammu and Kashmir had to be met on the basis of the Maharaja executing the *Instrument of Accession*, the thought of antagonising the one on whose signature on that document alone we could justify our legal case in Jammu and Kashmir was distressing to him.

“...Sardar also felt it would be in the long-term interests of India to utilise the

Maharaja's undoubted influence among the various sections of the people to force a permanent bond between the State and India...He [Sardar] was doubtful if the weakening of the administrative authority by the Maharaja to the extent demanded by the Sheikh was in the interests of the State and India. He felt that the last thing that should occur at that critical period was for the Maharaja and the Sheikh to work at cross-purposes with each other or for the already disillusioned people of the State to harbour doubts about the future of the Government or the Maharaja.

“...Sardar Patel also came into conflict with Pt Nehru and Gopalaswami Ayyangar owing to the personal rift between the Maharaja and Sheikh Abdullah. It can scarcely be denied that the latter wanted the Maharaja's head on a charger and taking advantage of the wrong assessment by Pandit Nehru and Gopalaswami Ayyangar ... he literally wanted to dictate his own terms...”

Blunder-21 : **Kashmiri Pandits vs. Kashmiri Pandits**

The tormentors of the Kashmiri Pandits (KPs) have been Kashmiri Pandits themselves, or Kashmiri-Pandit-Converts. Most notably, people like Pandit Nehru who created the Kashmir problem in the first place; and then, rather than solving it, made it more complicated.

Writes B Krishna in his book ‘Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel’, “Nehru’s bias in favour of Abdullah was evident from what he said in August 1945 at the annual session of the National Conference at Sopore in the Valley, *‘If non-Muslims want to live in Kashmir, they should join the National Conference or bid goodbye to the country... If Pandits do not join it, no safeguards and weightages will protect them.’*”

Nehru threatening his own people! And, not for any wrong committed by them. But to undemocratically force them to back a person who turned out to be a bigot, and an anti-national.

Incidentally, Sheikh Abdullah himself was a Kashmiri Pandit convert. Sheikh Abdullah’s grandfather was a Hindu Kashmiri Pandit by the name of Ragho Ram Koul, who was converted to Islam in 1890, and was named Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, the name his grandson took.

Even Sir Allama Mohammad Iqbal (1877–1938), who floated the concept of Pakistan, was a Kashmiri Pandit convert—second generation. His father was one Rattan Lal Sapru, who was caught embezzling money as the revenue collector of an Afghan governor. He was then given the option to either convert to Islam or be hanged. He chose to convert, whereupon his relatives excommunicated him.

Those who drove out the Kashmiri Pandits from the valley also happen to be Kashmiri-Pandit-Converts. Fundamentalist Islam is supremacist, intolerant, cruel, and inhuman like the ISIS.

That KPs have been their own worst enemies is highlighted by the following interesting historical episode: Rinchin was a Buddhist from Ladakh. Hinduism (Shaivism) was then the dominant religion in Kashmir. Islam was on the fringe, and was at the time being propagated by Saiyyid Bilal Shah, popular as Bulbul Shah. After Sahadev fled and Dulacha left, Sahadev’s Army Chief, Ramchandra, occupied the throne of Kashmir. But Rinchin, who had a key post in Sahadev’s administration, plotted and eliminated Ramchandra, and sat in his place in 1320 CE.

To pacify the public provoked by the misdeed, Rinchin married Kotarani, daughter of Ramchandra. At Kotarani's behest, discarding Buddhism, Rinchin adopted Shaivism to become acceptable to the public. But the Kashmiri Pandits refused to accept him in their fold, saying that his conversion was not feasible—a legend says they couldn't decide which caste to put him in.

As a reaction to the rebuff, and at the instance of Shah Mir, Rinchin then approached Bulbul Shah, who converted him to Islam, and gave him the name Sultan Malik Sadruddin.

Rinchin later built a mosque called the Bodro Masjid, venerated both by the Ladakh Buddhists and the Kashmiri Muslims.

With the king converted to Islam, many others followed. And thus Islam spread in the Kashmir Valley.

This is how Pandits scored a self-goal. So, in a way, the Kashmiri Pandits have themselves to blame for inadvertently giving a push to the Islamisation of the Valley, though it was the later state-backed campaign—through preaching, patronage, incentives and forced conversions—that reduced the Pandits from an overwhelming majority to a minority.

Blunder-22 :
Sidelining the One Who Could have Tackled J&K

Sardar Patel had remarked to HV Kamath that had Nehru and Gopalaswami Aiyangar not made Kashmir their close preserve, separating it from his portfolio of Home and States, he would have tackled the problem as purposefully as he had done for Hyderabad.

Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, a close friend and a confidant of Nehru, had remarked: *"...We should have absorbed Kashmir for good and all...I do not know where we are going. The country needs a man like Patel."*

"Patel was as strongly against the reference to the UN and preferred 'timely action' on the ground, but Kashmir was Jawaharlal's baby by now and Vallabhbhai did not insist on his prescriptions when, at the end of December [1947], Nehru announced that he had decided to go to the UN. Jawaharlal obtained Mahatma's reluctant consent... Patel's misgivings were amply fulfilled after India invited the UN's assistance..."

—Rajmohan Gandhi in 'Patel—A Life'

Said Jayaprakash Narayan: *"Kashmir issue, being left to Nehru, proved to be unfortunate for the nation. Because of Panditji's mishandling, the issue did no longer remain an internal affair, as it should be, but is smouldering as an international issue in the United Nations and its Security Council, making it possible for Pakistan to rake it up every now and then. Many a veteran leader in the country maintains that had the matter been handled by the Sardar, he would have found a satisfactory solution, and thus prevented it becoming a perennial headache for us and a cause of bitterness and animosity between India and Pakistan."*

The matter of Princely States was under the States Ministry, which was under the charge of Sardar Patel. Patel had ably dealt with the complexity of over 500 Princely States. As such J&K should also have been left to Patel. However, without the concurrence of Sardar, and without even the courtesy of informing him, Nehru appointed N Gopalaswami Ayyangar as a Cabinet Minister without portfolio to assist him (Nehru) in handling Kashmir. Sardar became aware of Ayyangar's role indirectly when he [Ayyangar] issued a note in connection with J&K, without consulting Sardar. Patel wrote to Gopalaswami in the connection on 22 December 1947.

Meanwhile, Nehru, when he became aware of Patel's above letter of 22

December 1947, chose to write a rather harsh and bossy letter to Patel: “Gopalaswami Ayyangar has been especially asked to help in Kashmir matters. Both for this reason and because of his intimate knowledge and experience of Kashmir he had to be given full latitude. I really do not see where the States Ministry comes into the picture, except that it should be kept informed of steps taken. All this was done at my instance and I do not propose to abdicate my functions in regard to matters for which I consider myself responsible. May I say that the manner of approach to Gopalaswami was hardly in keeping with the courtesy due to a colleague?”

Response to such an intemperate letter was on expected lines. Patel wrote to Nehru on 23 December 1947: “Your letter of today has been received just now at 1pm and I am writing immediately to tell you this. It has caused me considerable pain. Your letter makes it clear to me that I must not or at least cannot continue as a Member of Government and hence I am hereby tendering my resignation. I am grateful to you for the courtesy and kindness shown to me during the period of office which was a period of considerable strain.”

Disenchanted and frustrated with Nehru’s hubris, and his improper, thoughtless, and dictatorial ways, Patel expressed to Gandhi his wish to dissociate himself from the government in December 1947 and again in January 1948.

Blunder-23 :
Hyderabad—another Kashmir or Pakistan?

The State of Hyderabad then ruled by Nizam Ali Khan first came under the paramountcy of the British in 1766. However, breaking his treaty with the British, the Nizam allied himself with Hyder Ali of Mysore in 1767. Their joint forces were defeated by the British in 1768, and Hyderabad State again came under the paramountcy of the British. In 1799 the Nizam helped East India Company defeat Tippu Sultan. Nizam Mir Usman Ali Khan, the seventh Nizam, ruled the State at the time of Independence. He was granted the title, *Faithful Ally of the British Government*.

At the time of Independence, Hyderabad was a premier State, with an area of about 2,14,000 square kilometres, population of 16 million, and an annual revenue of 26 crores. It had its own coinage, paper currency and stamps. 85% of its population of 1.6 crores was Hindu. However, the Police, the Army, and the Civil Services were almost completely the preserve of the Muslims. Even in its Legislative Assembly set up in 1946 the Muslims were in majority, despite forming a mere 15% of the population.

Soon after the announcement of the *3-June-1947 Plan* or the *Mountbatten Plan* of the partition of India, Nizam declared on 12 June 1947 that he would join neither India nor Pakistan, and would remain independent. He wanted to secure the Dominion Status for his State from the British, like the one proposed for partitioned India and Pakistan, although the same was not allowed for any Princely State.

Had it been left to Nehru, and had it not been for Sardar Patel, Hyderabad state would have been either another Kashmir or another Pakistan.

While Mountbatten and the British had nothing to say on the grossly unethical, illegal and even barbarous acts of Pakistan in Kashmir, and of Razakars in Hyderabad; it is significant that Mountbatten, thanks to the elevated position accorded to him by Nehru and Gandhi, was liberal in his moral lectures to India, and wanted India “to adopt ethical and correct behaviour towards Hyderabad, and to act in such a way as could be defended before the bar of world opinion.” However, moral lectures to Pakistan were out of his ambit.

V Shankar writes in ‘My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel Vol.1’: “Hyderabad occupied a special position in the British scheme of things and therefore touched a special chord in Lord Mountbatten...The ‘faithful ally’ concept still ruled the attitude of every British of importance... all the other rulers were watching

whether the Indian Government would concede to it a position different from the other states...

“Lastly, on Hyderabad, Pandit Nehru and some others in Delhi were prepared to take a special line; in this Mrs Sarojini Naidu and Miss Padmaja Naidu, both of whom occupied a special position in Pandit Nehru’s esteem, were not without influence. There were also forces which were not slow or hesitant to point out the special position of the Muslims in the state... Apart from Lord Mountbatten’s understandable sympathy for the Muslim position in Hyderabad, shared by Pandit Nehru, in anything that concerned Pakistan even indirectly, he was for compromise and conciliation to the maximum extent possible...”

“Sardar [Patel] was aware of the influence which Lord Mountbatten exercised over both Pandit Nehru and Gandhiji; often that influence was decisive... Sardar had made up his mind that Hyderabad must fit into his policy regarding the Indian states... I know how deeply anguished he used to feel at his helplessness in settling the problem with his accustomed swiftness...”

“...the decision about the Police Action in Hyderabad in which case Sardar described the dissent of Rajaji and Pandit Nehru as *‘the wailing of two widows* as to how their departed husband [Gandhiji] would have reacted to the decision involving such a departure from non-violence.”

Wrote the veteran Congress leader DP Mishra: “...When he [Nehru] had written to Patel that the Muslims of Hyderabad should have weightage on the ground that ‘Hyderabad had been hundred percent a Muslim state’ [though 85% of the population was Hindu!], he seemed to forget that in that sense, Kashmir too had been a hundred percent Hindu state and that while he was placating the Nizam and the Muslim minority in Hyderabad, he had ignored the Maharaja of Kashmir and the wishes of the Hindu minority in Kashmir in order to placate Sheikh Abdullah...”

Mountbatten, also Chairman of the Defence Committee, had recorded: “Pandit Nehru said openly at the meeting, and subsequently assured me privately, that he would not allow any orders to be given for operations [in Hyderabad] to start unless there really was an event, such as a wholesale massacre of Hindus within the State, which would patently justify, in the eyes of the world, action by the Government of India.”

What would the world think? What Mountbatten thought? What about his own image? These seemed to weigh more with Nehru. Why couldn’t he also think the opposite: that the world would consider India a sissy and a fool to ignore its own

national interests.

Distressed about Nehru's reluctance to act, Patel had written to NV Gadgil: "I am rather worried about Hyderabad. This is the time when we should take firm and definite action. There should be no vacillation; and the more public the action is the greater effect it will have on the morale of our people, both here and in Hyderabad, and will convince our opponents that we mean business. There should be no lack of definiteness or strength about our actions. If, even now, we relax, we shall not only be doing a disservice to the country, but would be digging our own grave."

On the use of force by India to settle the Hyderabad issue, V Shankar writes in 'My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel, Vol-1': "The entire staff for the purpose had been alerted and the timing depended on how long it would take for Sardar to overcome the resistance to this course by C Rajagopalachari, who succeeded Lord Mountbatten as Governor General, and by Pandit Nehru, who found in C Rajagopalachari an intellectual support for his non-violent policy towards Hyderabad.."

Shankar quotes Sardar's response to a query, "Many have asked me the question what is going to happen to Hyderabad. They forget that when I spoke at Junagadh, I said openly that if Hyderabad did not behave properly, it would have to go the way Junagadh did. The words still stand and I stand by these words."

Writes Kuldeep Nayar in 'Beyond the Lines': "...Reports circulating at the time said that even then Nehru was not in favour of marching troops into Hyderabad lest the matter be taken up by the UN... It is true that Patel chafed at the 'do-nothing attitude of the Indian government'..."

V Shankar states in 'My Reminiscences of Sardar Patel Vol.2': "The situation in Hyderabad was progressing towards a climax. Under Sardar's constant pressure, and despite the opposition of Pandit Nehru and Rajaji, the decision was taken to march into Hyderabad and thereby to put an end both to the suspended animation in which the State stood and the atrocities on the local population which had become a matter of daily occurrence."

Sardar Patel's daughter's "The Diary of Maniben Patel: 1936-50" states: "About Hyderabad, Bapu [her father, Sardar Patel] said if his counselling had been accepted—the problem would have been long solved...Bapu replied [to Rajaji], '...Our viewpoint is different. I don't want the future generation to curse me that these people when they got an opportunity did not do it and kept this ulcer [Hyderabad princely state] in the heart of India...It is States Ministry's

[which was under Sardar Patel] function [to make Hyderabad state accede to India]. How long are you and Panditji going to bypass the States Ministry and carry on... Bapu told Rajaji that Jawaharlal continued his aberration for an hour and a half in the Cabinet—that we should decide our attitude about Hyderabad. The question will be raised in the UN... Bapu said, ‘I am very clear in my mind—if we have to fight—Nizam is finished. We cannot keep this ulcer in the heart of the union. His dynasty is finished.’ He (Jawaharlal) was very angry/hot on this point.”

“...Hyderabad, a State covering 80,000 square miles in the heart of peninsular India was at that time in the grip of an unscrupulous minority which aimed at secession from India. Had the bid succeeded, India might not have survived as a political unit. This situation needed a man of iron who would not balk at coercive action, and in Sardar, India had at that vital moment just the man.”

—Gordan Graham in the ‘Christian Science Monitor’

General Bucher, who was in charge, but was reluctant for the Hyderabad action, finally admitted:

“I take no credit to myself for the success of the Hyderabad operation. In all the circumstances from beginning to end, I was not prepared to say ‘Go’, until every possible development had been thought out and guarded against. *The Sardar was, in my opinion, a very great man indeed...* Undoubtedly, he was right when he decided that either the Government of Hyderabad must accept the Indian Government’s conditions, or else the State would have to be entered in order to eliminate the Razakars.”

Pusillanimous Nehru was so opposed to the use of force against Hyderabad that after Patel got the same approved by the cabinet Nehru called his cabinet colleague SP Mukherjee and remonstrated with him for supporting Patel on the issue, and warned him [being a Bengali] that India’s action would lead to retaliation by Pakistan, which was likely to invade West Bengal, and bomb Calcutta. Unexpected by Nehru, Mukherjee nonchalantly responded that the people of Bengal and Calcutta had enough patriotism to suffer and sacrifice for the national cause, and would be overjoyed when they learn that General JN Chaudhuri, a Bengali, had conquered Hyderabad!

External Security

Blunder-24 : **Inexplicably Irresponsible Ideas**

The seeds of India's disgraceful debacle in 1962 India-China War were sown soon after Independence by none other than Nehru himself, as would be shockingly obvious from the incident below.

Shortly after independence, the first Army Chief of independent India Lt General Sir Robert Lockhart (India and Pakistan had British Army Chiefs initially) took a strategic defence plan for India to Nehru, seeking a Government directive in the matter.

Reportedly, Lockhart returned shell-shocked at Nehru's response: "*The PM took one look at my paper and blew his top. 'Rubbish! Total rubbish! We don't need a defence plan. Our policy is ahimsa [non-violence]. We foresee no military threats. Scrap the army! The police are good enough to meet our security needs', shouted Nehru.*"

Given such a mind-set, only God could have saved India in times of disaster. Unfortunately, God too abandoned India in the 1962 War. Perhaps God was cheesed off by the "rational", "scientific-minded", atheist-agnostic Nehru!

The art of war is of vital importance to the State. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.

—Sun Tzu, 'Art of War'

But, what did Nehru do? Despite the "Glimpses of World History" and the "Discovery of India", Nehru failed to discover that India suffered slavery for well over a millennium on account of its weakness to defend itself. No wonder, he neglected modernisation of the army, strengthening of defence, and pacts with powerful nations to deter enemies and ensure India's security.

Risking country's defence on the altar of "Ahimsa", and talking of scrapping the army and making do with only the Police, Nehru actually went ahead and reduced the army strength by about 50,000 troops after independence despite the looming threat in Kashmir, and the Chinese entry into Tibet.

From 1915 onwards, when Gandhi returned from South Africa, the top Gandhian leaders had 32 long years till independence in 1947 to study, discuss, argue, and thrash out all issues vital to independent India. When in the British

jails together for many years, they had long, uninterrupted and undisturbed times to work out all details under the sun for free India. In fact, all relevant policies on a variety of vital matters like external security, internal security, foreign policy, industrial and agricultural policy, education policy, and so on should have been formulated by mutual consent, leaving no room for dictators like Nehru to plough their own furrow after independence. But, no. It seems they pondered only on vital subjects like Ahimsa, communalism, secularism, upvas, nutrition, and so on! For external security, it appears they banked only on Ahimsa and their own good conduct, and reciprocation of that conduct from their potential enemies and adversaries—wishful thinking had no limits!

Blunder–25 :
No Settlement with Pakistan

Nehru failed to reach an accommodation with Pakistan during his life time, making our western and north western borders sensitive, costing us heavy to secure them.

The crux of the Indo-Pak dispute was Kashmir; and Pakistan was unwilling for settlement and for no-war pact till the Kashmir issue was resolved. Kashmir would have been a non-issue had Nehru allowed Sardar Patel to handle it; or had Gandhi not made Nehru the first PM.

However, it was Nehru who created the Kashmir problem, and made it even more complicated. It was Nehru's responsibility to resolve the issues he had created. Nehru unfortunately expired leaving both the issues—Kashmir and Indo-Pak settlement—unsolved.

The India-Pakistan Indus Water Treaty (IWT) of 1960 on sharing of waters from the six Indus-system rivers was an unprecedented (by any nation) generous “give away” (like the India-China Panchsheel agreement later of 1954) by Nehru to Pakistan at the cost of J&K and Punjab (details in Blunder–40), with no reciprocal “take”. It didn't occur to Nehru to make it conditional upon Pakistan settling on J&K and other matters.

Intended to palliate India's alarm at Pakistan's entry into SEATO in 1958, General Ayub Khan proposed security alliance/pact with India to Nehru. Nehru summarily and scornfully rejected the proposal remarking security alliance “against whom?”

Blunder-26 :
Erasure of Tibet as a Nation

This is our only foreign debt, and some day we must pay the Mantzu and the Tibetans for the provisions we were obliged to take from them.

– Mao Zedong
when he had passed through the border
regions of Tibet during the Long March

In the 8th century, Tibetan King Trisong Dentsen had defeated China, which was forced to pay an annual tribute to Tibet. To put an end to mutual fighting, China and Tibet signed a treaty in 783 CE where boundaries were confirmed, and each country promised to respect the territorial sovereignty of the other. This fact is engraved on the stone monument at the entrance of the Jokhang temple, which still stands today. The engraving is both in Chinese and in Tibetan.

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The US felt disappointed to discover that India had resigned itself to leave Tibet to its fate, and sit back, and do nothing! The then US ambassador to India, Loy Henderson, described the Indian attitude as ‘philosophic acquiescence’.

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I [Sardar Patel] have been eating my heart out because I have not been able to make him [Nehru] see the dangers ahead. China wants to establish its hegemony over South-East Asia. We cannot shut our eyes to this because imperialism is appearing in a new garb...He is being misled by his courtiers. I have grave apprehensions about the future.

– Durga Das, reporting his talks with Sardar Patel in *India from Curzon to Nehru & After*

Nehru allowed Tibet, our peaceful neighbour and a buffer between us and China, to be erased as a nation, without even recording a protest in the UN, thereby making our northern borders insecure, and putting a question mark on the future of the water resources that originate in Tibet.

The Tibetan Government protested to the UN against the Chinese aggression. But, as Tibet was not a member of the UN, it was simply recorded by the UN Secretariat as an appeal from an NGO. Their appeal, in a way, was pigeonholed.

In view of this handicap, Tibetans requested the Government of India to raise the Tibet issue in the UN. But, India was not willing to do so, lest China should feel antagonised! What to speak of helping our neighbour who had appealed to

us for help, we shamelessly advised the victim, that is, Tibet, to seek peaceful settlement with the aggressor, China. Even worse, when through others, the Tibet's appeal came up on 23 November 1950 for discussions in the UN General Assembly, we opposed the discussions on a very flimsy ground—that India had received a note from China that the matter would be peacefully resolved!

Even though China had invaded Tibet, Panikkar, the Indian Ambassador in Beijing, went so far as to pretend that there was lack of confirmation of the presence of Chinese troops in Tibet and that to protest the Chinese invasion of Tibet would be an *interference to India's efforts on behalf of China in the UN!* That is, complaining against China on behalf of Tibet would show China in bad light—as an aggressor—when it was more important for India to ensure China's entry into the UN, for which India had been trying, and ensure that this effort of India was not thwarted by taking up China's Tibet aggression! Nehru agreed with the line.

What kind of crazy foreign policy was this? Our own national security interest and the interest of Tibet were sought to be sacrificed to help China enter the UN!!

With no one to sponsor the Tibetan appeal, possibility of some joint action was discussed by the Commonwealth delegation to the UN. *In the meeting, the Indian representative advised that India did not wish to raise the Tibetan issue in the UNSC, nor did India favour its inclusion in the UN General Assembly agenda!*

See the irony: Nehru referred to the UN what India should never have referred—the J&K issue, it being India's internal matter—and Nehru refused to refer a matter to the UN that India should certainly have referred—Tibet, despite its criticality both to India's external security, and to the survival of Tibet as a nation.

When Nehru should not have acted, he did act; and when he should have acted, he didn't! Both, his action and his inaction, led to disastrous consequences for India. *Nehru's strategy was India's and Tibet's tragedy.*

Even if China could not be militarily prevented, if India and other nations had recognised Tibet as a separate nation, pressure could have been kept up on China to get independence for Tibet on some future date.

Writes Dalvi in his book 'Himalayan Blunder': "In October 1950 I was a student at the Defence services Staff College in Wellington, South India. Soon after the news of the Chinese entry in into Tibet reached us, the Commandant,

General WDA (Joe) Lentaigne, strode into the main lecture hall, interrupted the lecturer and proceeded to denounce our leaders for their short-sightedness and inaction, in the face of Chinese action... he said that India's back door had been opened... He predicted that India would have to pay dearly for failure to act... His last prophetic remark was that some of the students present in the hall would be fighting the Chinese before retirement."

The US felt disappointed to discover that India had resigned itself to leave Tibet to its fate, and sit back, and do nothing! The then US ambassador to India, Loy Henderson, described the Indian attitude as '*philosophic acquiescence*'.

Said Dr Rajendra Prasad: "In the matter of Tibet, we acted unchivalrously, but even against our interest in not maintaining the position of a buffer state, for it had thus exposed the frontier of 2,500 miles to the Chinese... I have very strong feeling about it. I feel that the blood of Tibet is upon us..."

Several prominent Indian leaders and citizens decided to observe the *Tibet Day* in August 1953 to protest Chinese invasion of Tibet. Nehru wrote to AICC that Congress members should not participate in the same, as it was an unfriendly act towards China!

Reportedly, Nehru tried to rationalise India's inaction on various pretexts, the most bizarre among them being that Tibetan society was backward and feudal, and that reforms were bound to upset the ruling elite, and so on.

Walter Crocker writes in '*Nehru: A Contemporary's Estimate*': "It was being said in Delhi in 1952-53 that Nehru, in private and semi-private, justified the Chinese invasion of Tibet..."

Says Arun Shourie in '*Are we deceiving ourselves again?*': "Panditji has now come down firmly against the order in Tibet: it isn't just that we cannot support Tibet. His position now is that we must not support Tibet. The reason is his progressive [How regressive progressives can be!] view of history! The Tibet order is feudal. And how can we be supporting feudalism?..."

"Panditji reiterates the other reasons for neither acting nor regretting the fact of not acting: 'We must remember that Tibet has been cut off from the world for a long time and, socially speaking, is very backward and feudal. Changes are bound to come there to the disadvantage of the small ruling class and the big monasteries...I can very well understand these feudal chiefs being annoyed with the new order. We can hardly stand up as defenders of feudalism.'"

Crazy, perplexing and inexplicable! What does Nehru's logic lead to? It is all right for a country that is backward and feudal to be taken over by another

country if that would help it progress!

By that logic, the USA could have colonised most of Asia and Africa that was backward and feudal—including India, which also fell in that category—and Nehru would have been fine with that! And, how was the brutal communism of China superior to Buddhist feudalism!!

Why did Nehru operate in such a lamentable way?

Nehru thought that doing so would appease China and make for better neighbourly relations. That was odd. It was like substituting a very peaceful and harmless neighbour for a dangerous bully.

Writes Arun Shourie in ‘Are we deceiving ourselves again?’: “...response of the [Indian] Government has been to be at its craven best in the belief, presumably, that, *if only we are humble enough to the python, it will not swallow us...*” Said Winston Churchill: “*An appeaser is one who feeds a crocodile, hoping it will eat him last.*”

Watching the way India capitulated, Chinese perhaps developed contempt for India and its leaders. Mao respected only the strong, and not the weak who bent over backwards to please him. India’s pusillanimity must have emboldened China. What was the result? Those who abandon their friends and neighbours, especially weaker ones, in their difficulties, should know that their own time would also come. And it came. As India realised in 1962. *What was once a most secure border became the most insecure border, thanks to Nehru.*

The communist-socialist-leaning Krishna Menon and KM Panikkar were Nehru’s advisors on Tibet and China. KM Panikkar was India’s ambassador to China and had explicitly stated India’s policy on Tibet as “autonomy within the framework of Chinese sovereignty”. The actual term was “suzerainty” and not “sovereignty”, but it seems there was a criminal oversight to the advantage of China. Or, was it deliberate on the part of the communist-sympathiser Panikkar? Why was he not sacked? The correction from India’s side was belated, and it is even reported that the same was suppressed by Panikkar.

During his last days in 1964, Nehru was reported to have said: “*I have been betrayed by a friend. I am sorry for Tibet.*” Betrayal? One does not understand! In international politics, if you are naive and incompetent to take care of your own interests, you would keep getting betrayed.

Blunder-27 :
Panchsheel—Selling Tibet; Harming Self

Despite what China did to Tibet, India signed ‘The Panchsheel Agreement’ with China on 29 April 1954. The agreement itself was titled “Agreement on Trade and Intercourse between the Tibet region of China and India” thus acknowledging Tibet as a part of China.

India did this despite its own stand to the contrary earlier. The flag of Tibet was put up on 15 August 1947 in the Parliament, acknowledging Tibet as a separate nation. Right up to 1949, Nehru, in his official communications, used words like the ‘Tibet Government, our two countries’, and so on, leaving no doubt that India recognised Tibet as a separate, independent nation.

India gained nothing through the Agreement, and all benefits accrued to China.

India did not even insist on prior settlement of borders. Reportedly, Girija Shankar Bajpai of the External Affairs Ministry had advised on settlement of the borders prior to the signing of Panchsheel, but his suggestion was ignored by all the three concerned: KM Pannikar, Krishna Menon, and Nehru. Our ambassador to China, KM Pannikar, was later derisively referred to as “ambassador of China”.

“This great doctrine [Panchsheel] was born in sin, because it was enunciated to put the seal of our approval upon the destruction of an ancient nation which was associated with us spiritually and culturally... It was a nation which wanted to live its own life and it sought to have been allowed to live its own life...”

—Acharya Kriplani

Dalai Lama writes poignantly in his autobiography ‘Freedom in Exile’: “Yet I was conscious that outside Tibet the world had turned its back on us. Worse, India, our nearest neighbour and spiritual mentor, had tacitly accepted Peking’s claim to Tibet. In April 1954, Nehru had signed a new Sino-Indian treaty which included a memorandum known as Panchsheel... According to this treaty, Tibet was part of China.”

Ambedkar disagreed with the Tibet policy of India and felt that “there is no room for Panchsheel in politics”. He said that “if Mr Mao had any faith in the Panchsheel, he certainly would treat the Buddhist in his own country in a very different way.”

“I hope I am not seeing ghosts and phantoms, but I see the murder of Tibet recoiling on India.”

—Dr Rajendra Prasad

India did not even insist on prior settlement of borders. Reportedly, Girija Shankar Bajpai of the External Affairs Ministry had advised on settlement of the borders prior to the signing of Panchsheel, but his suggestion was ignored.

Upon criticism of the Panchsheel in parliament, Nehru had brazenly stated that in the realm of foreign affairs he could never take so much credit as for the India-China settlement over Tibet! An amazing assertion indeed! All agreements among nations involve give and take. Panchsheel was only a “give away” with no reciprocal “take”. Through Panchsheel India literally gave Tibet to China on a platter, without negotiating anything in return either for Tibet or for India.

There is also a book, *‘Born in Sin: The Panchsheel Agreement—The Sacrifice of Tibet’*, authored by Claude Arpi, the French-born writer, historian and tibetologist.

Panchsheel is actually a most eloquent example of the naivety of the Indian diplomacy and a shining example of what an international agreement should not be!

Blunder-28 : **Not Settling Boundary Dispute with China**

Nehru failed to negotiate with China on a peaceful settlement of borders, so vital to India's security. Doing so was not difficult considering that China at that time was not strong, had numerous external and internal problems to contend with, and was therefore willing for a “give and take”, particularly *Aksai Chin—McMahon Line swap*: recognition of McMahon Line by China in return for India's recognition of China's claim on Aksai Chin, with minor adjustments. For over a decade (the whole of fifties and the early sixties), umpteen occasions presented themselves, both during the numerous visits of Zhou En Lai to India and the visit of Nehru to China, to settle the issue, but Nehru frittered away all the opportunities. Nehru let go even the Panchsheel moment to close the issue.

In his book ‘India-China Boundary Problem, 1846-1947’, AG Noorani mentions that a map annexed to the Mountbatten’s Report on his Viceroyalty labelled northern boundaries as *Boundary Undefined*. Map annexed to a White Paper on Indian States released in July 1948 by the Ministry of States under Sardar Patel also did not show these borders as clearly defined, unlike the McMahon Line which was clearly shown. The controversial area was Aksai Chin.

However, the maps were unilaterally altered after July 1954 at the instance of Nehru, and began to show a clear, demarcated border—that included Aksai Chin—as unilaterally decided by India. In his memo of 1 July 1954 some of Nehru’s directives were:

“All our old maps dealing with this frontier should be carefully examined and, where necessary, withdrawn. New maps should be printed showing our Northern and North Eastern frontier without any reference to any ‘line’. These new maps should also not state there is any undemarcated territory. The new maps should be sent to our Embassies abroad and should be introduced to the public generally and be used in our schools, colleges, etc... Both as flowing from our policy and as consequence of our Agreement with China [which agreement?], this frontier should be considered a firm and definite one which is not open to discussion with anybody. There may be very minor points of discussions. Even these should not be raised by us...”

Writes Kuldip Nayar in ‘Beyond the Lines’: “...I was only the home ministry’s information officer and had no official locus standi, but it was obvious that the Polish ambassador was on a mission. He invited me for a chat at his chancery

and expected me to convey what he had said to [Gobind Ballabh] Pant [Nehru's Home Minister]. At the beginning of the conversation he said that the proposal he would make had the support of all Communist countries, and specifically mentioning the Soviet Union. His proposal was that India should accept a package political deal, getting recognition for the McMahon Line in exchange for handing over control of some areas in Ladakh [Aksai Chin] to China. He said that the areas demanded had never been charted, and nobody could say to whom they belonged. What was being claimed to be India's was what had been forcibly occupied by the UK. No power could honour 'the imperialist line', nor should India insist upon it. Whatever the odds, China would never part with the control of the road it had built. That was lifeline between Sinkiang and other parts of China, he argued. I conveyed the proposal to Pant who gave me no reaction, his or that of the government."

What is the position now? India would be happy to do what China had repeatedly proposed in the 1950s and early 1960s, but what Nehru had declined. But, now being a super power, China is playing difficult. In personal life, as also in the life of a nation, what you don't do when it can and should be done, you fail to achieve later. Time and tide wait for none. Who is paying for the missed opportunities? The whole nation—for the last many decades.

Blunder–29: **The Himalayan Blunder: India-China War**

India and China had a record going back thousands of years for never having fought a war between them. Nehru, through his unwise and ill-considered policies, broke that record, though unwillingly.

Nehru's *forward policy* and his failure in settling the borders resulted in India-China war and its consequent human and financial loss. Here, we are talking of what India could control, not what China had in mind.

India began building forward check-posts under its hare-brained Forward Policy—which was actually a “bluff” masquerading as a military strategy. Their locations were as per the border unilaterally determined by India, and not as per mutual discussions with China. There was, therefore, a possibility of China's objection, and even Chinese action to demolish the posts. The fact was that the boundaries were not settled, so what was say within Indian boundary for India, may have been within Chinese boundary for China.

If you had not settled the boundaries, controversies were bound to arise. But, rather than negotiating a boundary with China and reaching a peaceful settlement, Nehru-Menon & Co in their wisdom—their Forward Policy—convinced themselves that it is they who would determine the boundary, and in token thereof, establish their posts, like markers. That China could object, and then attack and demolish those posts, and even move forward into India did not seem to them a possibility.

Why? Because, reasoned Nehru: any such "reckless" action by China would lead to world war, and China would not precipitate such a thing! That what they were themselves doing was also "reckless" did not apparently strike the wise men.

Writes Kuldeep Nayar in 'Beyond the Lines': "...Nehru ordered that police check-posts be established to register India's presence in the Ladakh area. As many as 64 posts were built, but they were not tenable. Home Secretary Jha told me that it was the 'bright idea' of B.N. Malik, the director of intelligence, to set up police posts 'wherever we could', *even behind the Chinese lines*, in order to 'sustain our claim' on the territory. This was Nehru's 'Forward policy', but then Jha said, 'Malik does not realise that these isolated posts with no support from the rear would fall like ninepins if there was a push from the Chinese side. We have unnecessarily exposed the policemen to death.' He went on to say: 'Frankly, this is the job of the army, but as it has refused to man the posts until

full logistical support is provided, New Delhi has pushed the police.’”

“Mao commented on Nehru’s Forward Policy with one of his epigrams: ‘A person sleeping in a comfortable bed is not easily aroused by someone else’s snoring.’...[commented Mao:] ‘Since Nehru sticks his head out and insists on us fighting him, for us not to fight with him would not be friendly enough. Courtesy emphasises reciprocity.’”

—Henry Kissinger, ‘On China’

President Dr Radhakrishnan was so aghast at the Indian military debacle that when someone told him of a rumour that General BM Kaul had been taken prisoner by the Chinese, he commented, *“It is, unfortunately, untrue.”*

Wrote S Gopal, Nehru's official biographer: *“Things went so wrong that had they not happened it would have been difficult to believe them.”*

And, this is what Nehru himself admitted:

“We were getting out of touch with reality in the modern world and we were living in an artificial atmosphere of our creation...”

“We feel India has been ill-repaid for her diplomatic friendliness toward Peking... Difficult to say the Chinese have deliberately deceived us... We may have deceived ourselves...”

Blunder-30 : **Criminal Neglect of External Security**

Nehru seemed to be clueless, even irresponsible, in not realising what it took for the country of the size of India, with its many inherited problems, to be able to defend itself adequately and deter others from any designs over it. On one hand, Nehru failed to settle border-issue with China, and on the other, he did irresponsibly little to militarily secure the borders we claimed ours. Nehru and his Defence Minister Krishna Menon ignored the persistent demands for military upgradation.

General Thapar had submitted a note to the government in 1960 pointing out that the equipment that the Indian army had and their poor condition was no match to that of China and even Pakistan. Prior to the operations against China to get certain territories vacated, Thapar had impressed upon Nehru that the Indian army was unprepared and ill-equipped for the task it was being asked to undertake. He even got Nehru to cross-check these stark realities from some of his senior staff. Yet, Nehru persisted, saying China would not retaliate! General Thapar told Kuldeep Nayar on 29 July 1970, as stated by Nayar in his book 'Beyond the Lines': "Looking back, I think I should have submitted my resignation at that time. I might have saved my country from the humiliation of defeat."

India's army chief KS Thimayya had repeatedly raised the issue of army's gross weaknesses in defending itself from China. Frustrated at his failure to get the needful done despite his entreaties to Krishna Menon and Nehru, this is what he told his fellow army-men in his farewell speech upon retirement in 1961: "*I hope I am not leaving you as cannon fodder for the Chinese. God bless you all!*"

Wrote Brigadier JP Dalvi in his book '*Himalayan Blunder*': "There was no overall political objective; no National Policy; no grand strategy and total unreadiness for military operations in the awesome Himalayan mountains, against a first-class land power... We did not study the pattern of weapons and communications equipments that we may require. Army Schools of Instruction were oriented towards open warfare. There was little emphasis on mountain warfare despite the Army's deployment in Kashmir from 1947... The Army was forgotten; its equipment allowed to become obsolete, certainly obsolescent; and its training academic and outdated. We merely tried to maintain what we had inherited in 1947... The political assumptions of our defence policies were invalid and dangerous... In October 1962 Indians were shocked beyond words to

discover that we had no modern rifle, although we were supposed to be ready to 'manufacture' an aircraft; and had the know-how to make an atom-bomb...

"Assam Rifles posts [under the forward policy] were deployed non-tactically and they were ill-armed and even worse equipped than the Regular Army. At best, they could only function as border check-posts and yet their task was 'to fight to the last man and the last round'... There were no inter-communication facilities between Assam Rifles' posts and the nearest Army sub-unit... The standard explanation was that there was a general shortage of wireless sets in the country. The Assam Rifles was a separate private army of the External Affairs Ministry. And who would dare bell the cat about the extraordinary command system?"

Despite the above sorry state of affairs, this is what Nehru stated in the Parliament: *"I can tell this House that at no time since our independence, and of course before it, were our defence forces in better condition, in finer fettle... than they are today. I am not boasting about them or comparing them with any other country's, but I am quite confident that our defence forces are well capable of looking after our country."* Nehru could get away with anything!

Nehru had stated: *"It is completely impracticable for the Chinese Government to think of anything in the nature of invasion of India. Therefore I rule it out..."* Contrast Nehru's above statement with the wisdom of Margaret Thatcher: *"Hope is no basis for a defence policy."*

Blunder-31 : **Politicisation of the Army**

Politicisation of the army high command was one of the reasons India performed miserably in the India-China War.

Instead of heeding sound military advice, Nehru and Menon had put in place submissive officers at the top in the military, who would carry out their orders. Krishna Menon ill-treated people. He was offensive to the top-brass of the military. He antagonised many through his acerbic comments, sarcasm and supercilious behaviour. He had publicly humiliated top brass of the army. Eventually, some of their chosen submissive officers contributed to the humiliation of India.

General Verma had dared to write to the higher authorities the facts of poor operational readiness. He was asked to withdraw his letter. He refused and wanted the letter to be put on record. That honest, forthright and very capable officer was victimised—ultimately he resigned. Similarly, General Umrao Singh was removed for objecting to the reckless putting up of forward posts.

Writes GS Bhargava in his book ‘The Battle of NEFA’: “...a new class of Army Officer who could collude with politicians to land the country in straights in which it found itself in September-October 1962. Since qualities of heart and head ceased to be a passport to promotion for military officers...the more ambitious among them started currying favour with the politicians.”

Whichever domain, department, sector the babus, the IAS stepped in that area went to dogs. Came the defence secretary and his babudom between the army and the Defence Minister after independence, and the results are for anyone to check. Babus, who knew next to nothing on the defence matters, started dictating terms and making money.

Politicisation and favouritism became the order of the day, and professionalism went for a toss. Instead of exercising ‘political control’ over the military, what is exercised in practice is ‘bureaucratic control’. Defence Secretary is the boss and the Service Chiefs have a subservient role, with the military isolated from real decision-making! For example, the inputs of the Indian army on the military and strategic implications of Nehru’s forward policy were ignored.

The British-Indian army under the British, during the pre-independence days, though under the political control of the Governor General, enjoyed a large degree of autonomy, and was not subservient to the bureaucracy. That changed

post-independence. The top bureaucracy, noticing Nehru's suspicion for and bias against the army, cleverly manoeuvred a note declaring the Armed Forces Headquarters as the "attached" office of the Defence Ministry. That ensured ascendancy for the top babu of the Defence Ministry—the Defence Secretary—over the army chief. The post of Commander-in-Chief was also done away with.

Defence Ministers largely rely on the "know-nothing-on-defence" bureaucrats from Defence Secretary down, who, in turn, deal with the three Services Chiefs, and those lower down in the army, making the army dependent upon them (bureaucracy) for approval for various promotions, purchases, and facilities. The Babudom has therefore began to act like a mai-baap government to the army.

Blunder-32 :
Lethargic Intelligence Machinery

China declared unilateral ceasefire on 21 November 1962. However, even such an important announcement of China became known to the government belatedly.

Wrote Kuldip Nayar in 'Beyond the Lines':

"...A cavalcade of cars moved to the prime minister's residence. Nehru had just woken up and was totally unaware of the Chinese offer. This was typical of our intelligence agencies and of the functioning of the government. Though the statement on the ceasefire had reached newspaper offices just before midnight, the government was unaware of it. Even the official spokesman whom the pressman awoke for a reaction expressed ignorance. What a way to fight a war, I thought."

In the Tehelka Magazine of 13.10.2012, BG Verghese states in 'The War We Lost':

"Around midnight, a transistor with one of our colleagues crackled to life as Peking Radio announced a unilateral ceasefire and pull back to the pre-October 'line of actual control'... Next morning, all the world carried the news, but AIR still had brave jawans gamely fighting the enemy as none had had the gumption to awaken Nehru and take his orders as the news was too big to handle otherwise! Indeed, during the preceding days, everyone from general to jawan to officials and the media was tuned into Radio Peking to find out what was going on in our own country..."

The above are only two illustrative examples. When on critical matters you had no intelligence or prior information, what to speak of other matters. The life of our brave jawans came cheap. Just dump them in the war without any proper protective gear or arms, and without any intelligence on the enemy positions and preparation! All that the top bosses of the intelligence did was to butter up the higher authorities and the prime minister.

Blunder-33 : **Suppressing Truth**

Another notable aspect of the India-China boundary dispute was that like a dictator Nehru kept the whole thing under wraps. Wrote Neville Maxwell: "... This was true of the handling of the boundary question [with China] which was kept away not only from the Cabinet and its Foreign Affairs and Defence Committees, but also from Parliament until armed clashes made it impossible to suppress."

The India-China war of 1962 was indeed independent India's most traumatic and worst-ever external security failure. Any democratic country, worth its salt, would have instituted a detailed enquiry into all aspects of the debacle. But, what happened in practice under Nehru? Nothing! Nehru had stated in the Rajya Sabha on 9 November 1962 during the lull (24 October to 13 November 1962) in the war on account of the Chinese ceasefire, after the first phase of the India-China war that began on 20 October 1962, and lasted mere 4 days: "People have been shocked, all of us have been shocked, by the events that occurred from October 20 onwards, especially of the first few days, and the reverses we suffered. So I hope there will be an inquiry so as to find out what mistakes or errors were committed and who were responsible for them."

Why Nehru talked of enquiry above? During the lull period (24 October–13 November) India was making its preparations and those in power in Delhi were sure India would give a befitting reply to the Chinese—such was the unbelievable extent of self-deception! However, the subsequent war of 14-20 November 1962 proved even more disastrous for India. *Sensing its consequence upon him, Nehru conveniently forgot about the enquiry.*

Although no enquiry was set up by the Indian Cabinet or the Government, the new Chief of Army Staff, General Chaudhuri, did set up an Operations Review Committee headed by Lieutenant-General TB Henderson-Brooks, aka HB, of the Indian army—an Australian-born, second-generation English expatriate who had opted to be an Indian, rather than a British, citizen in the 1930s—with Brigadier Premendra Singh Bhagat, Victoria Cross, then commandant of the Indian Military Academy, as a member. However, the terms of reference of the Committee were never published; it had no power to examine witnesses or call for documents; and it had no proper legal authority. The purpose was to ensure it didn't morph into a comprehensive fact-finding mission that could embarrass the government. Reportedly, its terms of reference were very restrictive confined

perhaps to only the 4 Corps' operations. However, going by the fact that the report, referred to as the Henderson-Brooks Report or Henderson-Brooks/Bhagat Report or HB/B Report of even such a handicapped Committee has been kept classified and top secret even till today signifies that the Committee went beyond its limited terms of reference, did some very good work and managed to nail the root causes, which the powers that be wanted to remain hidden. Perhaps, had the HB report been made public, Nehru would have had to resign.

Any democratic country, worth its salt, would have instituted a detailed enquiry into all aspects of the debacle: "What was the nature of the border dispute? Why the issue was not resolved through talks? Why didn't India settle it in 1954 itself at the time of signing the Panchsheel? Was Indian position justified? Did Chinese arguments have substance? Why did India change its maps in 1954—on what grounds? Were there solid grounds for India to be so adamant on its stand? Why was the Chinese offer of a swap-deal on McMahon Line and Aksai Chin not accepted? Why was the forward policy adopted? Why the Indian defence preparedness was so poor? Had there been politicisation of the army? Why was the Indian performance in the war so pathetic? What should be India's stand going forward? How to resolve the dispute? How to strengthen India's defence?...". Accountability should have been established and those responsible should have got their just desserts.

Blunder-34 : **No Accountability**

Such was the economy practised in sharing information with the public, the media, and even the parliament, and such was the economy with truth in Nehru's democratic India that the blame for debacle in the India-China War came not on Nehru, the principal person responsible, but on Menon. Such was the ignorance of the opposition that Kriplani and others asked Nehru to take over the defence portfolio from Menon! The poor fellows had no idea that the disaster both in the foreign policy and in the defence was actually thanks to Nehru. Menon became Defence Minister only in 1957.

Krishna Menon was reluctantly made the scapegoat. COAS Thapar resigned. BM Kaul resigned. But, not Nehru.

Here is Israel and Golda Meir's example, in sharp contrast to that of India and Nehru's:

After its decisive victory against the joint Egypt-Syria-Jordan-Iraq army in 1967 in the Six-Day War, following its victories in 1948 at the time of its birth, and later, Israel was a little laid back and unprepared, thinking Arabs wouldn't dare attack again. Also because Israel had nuclear weapons by then to deter the Arabs. The attack of 1973 therefore came as a surprise to it. In 1973, Yom Kipper, the holiest day of the year for the Jews, fell on 6 October. It is on that day when Israel and the Jews the world over were busy observing Yom Kipper that the Egyptian and the Syrian armies launched a surprise attack against Israel in the Sinai Peninsula and the Golan Heights respectively. Still, after the initial setbacks and panic, it rose to the challenge, and repelled the combined attack, emerging triumphant. The war came to be known as the Yom Kipper War. Golda Meir was the president then.

Even though Israel's ultimate victory was spectacular and decisive, they immediately instituted an enquiry to fix responsibility for the initial setbacks and the panic reaction, and the lapses that led to the attack coming as a surprise.

The preliminary report took just a few months and was released on April 2, 1974—it actually named names of those responsible. Several top-ranking staff were asked to resign. Golda Meir was not named, but taking overall responsibility, she resigned on April 10, 1974—after mere eight days of release of the report, which was only a preliminary report! This, even though Israel, under Golda Meir, had actually won the war decisively and turned the tables on the Arab countries that had attacked them!

Contrast the above with Nehru and India. Even though India lost pathetically in the 1962 India-China War, Nehru government instituted no enquiry; and Nehru did not even make a gesture of an offer to resign.

Wrote Brigadier JP Dalvi in his book 'Himalayan Blunder': "When the inevitable disaster came Nehru did not even have grace or courage to admit his errors or seek a fresh mandate from the people. He did not even go through the motion of resigning; he merely presented his trusted colleagues and military appointees as sacrificial offerings... Instead of gracefully accepting responsibility for erroneous policies, the guilty men sought alibis and scapegoats.

"In any developed democracy the Government would have been replaced, instead of being allowed to continue in office and sit in judgement on their subordinates... We must also learn that a democracy has no room for proven failures. This is not a matter of sentiment. Mr Chamberlain was removed after Hitler invaded France in May 1940 with Cromwell's classic plea, 'For God's sake, go'. Mr Anthony Eden was forced out of office after the disastrous Suez adventure of 1956..."

Not only that, Nehru was not even willing to remove the Defence Minister Krishna Menon. Nehru told Yashwant Rao Chavan who had come to Delhi to attend a meeting of the Chief Ministers: *"You see, they want Menon's blood. If I agree, tomorrow they will ask for my blood."*

Nehru even played his old game of a threat of his own resignation. Nehru had threatened to resign on several earlier occasions to have his way safe in the knowledge that people would back off. But, not this time. When he found that the trick won't work and he himself would have to go, he quickly backed off and asked Menon to resign.

Nehru actually remonstrated with those who criticised him, and later even took revenge against some!

What was the alibi offered to the gullible public? The nation was told that the borders were well-settled, and that the unprovoked attack from China was what the innocent India got for doing all the good to China. Even Rajaji, otherwise in opposition to Nehru by then, blamed it on the treachery of the Chinese. Perhaps, at that time Rajaji did not know all the details.

You do a Himalayan blunder, but you receive sympathy—Nehru, the poor chap, was stabbed in the back by the Chinese! How publicised misinformation can turn the scales.

Everyone remembers a popular song of those times penned by poet Pradeep

and sung by Lata Mangeshkar. It went like this: "Aai mere watan ke logo, jara aankh me bhar lo paani, jo shaheed hue hai unki, jara yaad karo kurbani..." The song is invariably played on August 15 every year. Lata told in an interview when she had sung that song in Nehru's presence, Nehru had wept! So sensitive was he!! Again, additional praise. But, who was responsible for his own tears and tears in the eyes of crores of Indians, in the first place? Had sensible policies been followed, this huge tragedy that befell the nation, and the consequent tears, could have been avoided.

Blunder-35 : **Delayed Liberation of Goa**

Why should it have taken 14 long years after the Indian independence to throw out the Portuguese in 1961? If the British could quit the huge Indian mainland, couldn't Nehru get a small territory vacated? It was yet another example of faulty thinking, inability to take decisions, failure of foreign policy, lack of guts, and indifference to the defence and security of India.

During a long discussion on Goa in the Foreign Affairs Committee in 1950, Sardar Patel kept to himself listening to the various tame alternatives, then suddenly said at the end, "Shall we go in? It is two hours' work!" Patel was very keen to fulfil the assurance given to the Goa Congress in his letter of 14 May 1946 promising freedom from foreign domination. He was all for using force to settle the matter quickly. But, Nehru was too much of a sissy to take any effective steps. Patel felt exasperated.

Writes Durga Das in 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After' (Rupa, Page# 250): "Gandhi advised the people [Indians] of the French and Portuguese possessions in India not to revolt against their overlords on 15th August but to trust Nehru to do for his kith and kin what he was doing to assist the Indonesians to become free. Indirectly, Gandhi was voicing the fact that he differed from Patel's view on Goa and Pondicherry and other foreign enclaves and agreed with Nehru's that the question of their liberation could wait for some time."

With Nehru and Gandhi desired action could always wait. Idle and misleading talks substituted for decision and action. Both are responsible for the never-ending Kashmir problem. Left to Gandhi and Nehru, and had Patel not been on the scene, while Hyderabad and Junagadh would have been another Kashmir or Pakistan; there would have been dozens of independent Princely States sucking up to Britain or Pakistan, and becoming permanent headaches like Kashmir and Pakistan!

Blunder-36 :
Nehru's NO to Nuclear Arms

The then US president John F Kennedy was an admirer of Indian democracy, and when he learnt that China was on its way to detonate a nuclear device, he wanted that it ought to be a democratic country like India, and not communist China, which should have nuclear capability.

The Kennedy administration was ready to help India out with nuclear deterrence. But, as expected of 'Nabob of Cluelessness', a man-without-a-vision and a man callous-on-external-security, Nehru rejected the offer.

Currently, India has been canvassing support from various countries to become a member of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG)—in vain, so far.

Had Nehru gone along with Kennedy's advice, India would have detonated a nuclear device well before China. Had that happened, not only would India have been a member of the NSG long, long ago, but China would not have dared to attack India, nor would Pakistan have taken liberties to attack India in 1965.

Gandhian unproven, and never proven earlier or later, principles of non-violence had not only totally vitiated free India's approach to retaining its own freedom (that it got after a millennium) by strengthening its defence and external security; but also gave excuse to weaklings like Nehru to not fulfil their basic responsibility as prime minister of protecting India, under the garb of the hypocrisy of high moral principles, and being flag-bearers of world-peace.

Nehru failed to grasp the deterrence value of nuclear weapons. What is surprising is what were his cabinet colleagues, and other leaders of the ruling and the opposition parties doing? Were they mere mute and spineless witnesses to whatever the dictator Nehru chose to do?

Blunder-37 :
Responsible for 1965-War too, in a way

India's lack of pacts with powerful countries to back it up in case of external attacks (Nehruvian policy (fad) of “Non-Alignment” resulted in it being non-aligned with its own national security interests), its poor showing in 1962-War, the fact of its continued dependence on outdated armaments of World War-II vintage, the exposure of its gross deficiency in modern military hardware, and little efforts even post 1962-war to strengthen itself, prompted Pakistan to take advantage of the situation and attempt to grab Kashmir militarily in 1965.

India and Nehru did not wake up even as Pakistan equipped itself with first-class, modern military hardware from the USA, following its pact with the anti-communist Western Bloc.

Shastri was relatively a new entrant as PM, and he had hardly had time to come to grips with things crying for attention, let alone tackle the huge Nehru legacy of untackled problems.

The blame for the fact that Pakistan dared to attack India, on account of its known unpreparedness, therefore, rests squarely with Nehru. Nehru did not wake up even as Pakistan equipped itself with modern weapons thanks to the US and the West, and became their ally in the cold war; even as India remained neutral, non-aligned, ill-equipped, and unprepared. Nehru was apparently innocent on the fundamentals of the external security requirements.

Further, as per the US advice, had India gone nuclear (please read previous blunder), Pakistan would not have dared to attack India.

Blunder–38 :
International Record in Insecure Borders

Nehru's policies resulted in thousands of kilometres of all land boundaries of India, whether in the north or east or west or northeast or northwest, becoming sensitive and insecure, requiring massive investments to protect them.

What is noteworthy is that there were enough opportunities to peacefully settle the boundaries with China in the 1950s and early 1960s, yet most irresponsibly Nehru failed to encash on them.

The issue of boundary with Pakistan is the product of the Kashmir problem, which was actually created by Nehru.

Thanks to Gandhi and his choice for the first PM of India, perhaps India is the only country of its size in the world with such a long unsettled border with a giant neighbour, and disputes with another.

Rather than solving a plethora of severe problems crying for attention, the Nehruvian era added new problems, and not just added them, made them more difficult and almost insolvable, the most severe being securing the long borders.

Thanks to the Himalayas, the north from time immemorial has been the most secure natural boundary. Nehruvian policies managed to make them insecure! Kashmir is a Nehru-created problem, and because of it Indo-Pak border is also insecure.

Northeast has been made insecure thanks to gross misgovernance, corruption, and insurgency, and to Nehru turning a blind eye to proselytization, and to Muslim migrations from East Pakistan (Bangladesh).

Foreign Policy

Blunder-39 : **Nehru-Liaquat Pact 1950**

With indescribable atrocities against Hindus in East Bengal going unabated post independence, the GoI made an appeal to Pakistan to call a halt on the same. But, there was little response.

There was a marked difference between Punjab and Bengal in respect of the partition mayhem. In Punjab, the carnage was on both sides, East Punjab and West Punjab, although more in the Muslim-dominated West Punjab. In Bengal, the mayhem was mostly in the Muslim-dominated East Bengal. In Punjab, the migration was both ways: Muslims migrating from East Punjab in India to Pakistan, and Hindus migrating from Pakistan to East Punjab in India. In a way, there was a population transfer between West Punjab and East Punjab. In Bengal, the predominant migration was that of Hindus from East Bengal to West Bengal. There was a reverse migration of Muslims too, but comparatively far less.

However, the continued violence against the Hindus in East Bengal had begun provoking retaliation in West Bengal, like the anti-Muslim riots in Howrah that turned serious from 26 March 1950 onwards, leading to the beginning of migration of Muslims from West Bengal to East Bengal. That is, the population transfer that had happened in Punjab in 1947-48 began to happen in Bengal belatedly by March 1950. It is this which alarmed Pakistan and the Muslim League leaders, who had hitherto been inciting the mobs in East Bengal, and were happy at Hindus being at the receiving end.

It was only when the anti-Muslim riots in Howrah, in retaliation of the on-going carnage in East Bengal, took a serious turn from 26 March 1950 onwards that the Pakistan PM Liaquat Ali made his first conciliatory gesture in a speech at Karachi on 29 March 1950, and expressed his intention to travel to New Delhi soon to work out a solution.

It yet again proved Gandhian non-violence can never counter and quell violence; it is only the counter-violence or the deterrence of violence that can control violence.

Accordingly, the Pakistani PM Liaquat Ali hurried to New Delhi, and signed the Nehru-Liaquat Pact, also called the Delhi Pact, on 8 April 1950. It provided for safety of refugees, return of looted property, security of life and properties to

minorities; and so on.

As expected, while India firmly implemented the Pact, not Pakistan. While the anti-Muslim violence in West Bengal was put down with a firm hand, and the migration of Muslims from West Bengal to East Bengal ceased; the violence against the Hindus in East Bengal continued unabated, so also the migration of Hindus from East Bengal to West Bengal. That is, the carnage became only one-sided: that of Hindus in East Bengal. Also, the migration became only one way: Pakistan to India.

Looking to the track-record of the Muslim League leaders, who had themselves been inciting the mobs, Nehru should have known what the result of the pact would be. Sardar Patel was unhappy with the Pact, but being in the cabinet, didn't oppose it. However, Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and KC Niyogee, the two central ministers from West Bengal, immediately resigned from the Union Cabinet in protest against the Pact.

Rather than facilitating transfer of population between East and West Bengal, and removing forever the problem and the poison, Nehru extracted the following "benefits" from the pact: (a)checked depletion of Muslims in India by stopping their migration; (b)increase in Muslim numbers by allowing their reverse migration into India; (c)condemning Pakistani Hindus to atrocities, and (d)their forced migration into India.

Blunder-40 :
Indus Water Treaty—A Generous Give Away

In the India-Pakistan Indus Water Treaty (IWT) of 1960 on sharing of waters from the six Indus-system rivers, Nehru gave away far, far more than what was adequate, miserably failing to envisage India's future needs.

India-Pakistan Indus Water Treaty of 1960 has parallel with India-China Panchsheel agreement of 1954. Both had generous “give away” but no reciprocal “take” and both were thanks to Nehru!

Brahma Chellaney writes in ‘The Economic Times’ of 10 May 2012:

“Jawaharlal Nehru ignored the interests of Jammu and Kashmir and, to a lesser extent, Punjab when he signed the 1960 Indus Waters Treaty, under which India bigheartedly agreed to the exclusive reservation of the largest three of the six Indus-system rivers for downstream Pakistan.

“In effect, India signed an extraordinary treaty indefinitely setting aside 80.52% of the Indus-system waters for Pakistan—the most generous water-sharing pact thus far in modern world history.

“In fact, the volume of waters earmarked for Pakistan from India under the Indus treaty is more than 90 times greater than what the US is required to release for Mexico under the 1944 US-Mexico Water Treaty, which stipulates a minimum transboundary delivery of 1.85 billion cubic metres of the Colorado River waters yearly.

“Despite Clinton's advocacy of a Teesta treaty, the fact is that the waters of the once-mighty Colorado River are siphoned by seven American states, leaving only a trickle for Mexico.

“India and Nehru did not envisage—you may call it a lack of foresight on their part—that water resources would come under serious strain due to developmental and population pressures. Today, as the bulk of the Indus system's waters continue to flow to an adversarial Pakistan waging a war by terror, India's own Indus basin, according to the 2030 Water Resources Group, is reeling under a massive 52% deficit between water supply and demand...

“Worse still, the Indus treaty has deprived Jammu and Kashmir of the only resource it has—water. The state's three main rivers—the Chenab, the Jhelum (which boast the largest crossborder discharge of all the six Indus-system rivers) and the main Indus stream—have been reserved for Pakistan's use, thereby promoting alienation and resentment in the Indian state.

“This led the Jammu and Kashmir state legislature to pass a bipartisan resolution in 2002 calling for a review and annulment of the Indus treaty. To help allay popular resentment in the state over the major electricity shortages that is hampering its development, the central government subsequently embarked on hydropower projects like Baglihar and Kishenganga. But Pakistan—as if to perpetuate the alienation in the Indian state—took the Baglihar project to a World Bank-appointed international neutral expert and Kishenganga to the International Court of Arbitration, which last year stayed all further work on the project...”

Perplexing thing is that Nehru could settle an international water issue like Indus Water Treaty, for it involved only a generous give-away on the part of India; but he failed to tackle India’s own internal river-water disputes like those relating to the sharing of Narmada water, or the Krishna-Kaveri dispute.

Blunder-41 :
No Initiative on Sri Lankan Tamil Problem

The Sri Lankan Tamil problem was allowed to fester and Nehru did little to get the matter resolved in the fifties, when it could have been—and it grew worse.

Both the ‘Sri Lankan Citizenship Act of 1948’ and the ‘Official Language Act of 1956’ put the Tamils at a severe disadvantage. Sri Lanka witnessed mayhem of Tamils in 1958, amounting almost to genocide. Tamils everywhere were attacked mercilessly, and their properties were burnt or looted. Sinhala mobs poured kerosene over many Tamils, and burn them alive. Thousands were injured or killed. Many were internally displaced. It was a case of state-sponsored terror.

Walter Crocker, who was then the Australian ambassador to India, says in his book, ‘Nehru: A Contemporary’s Estimate’, that while India and Nehru spoke against the treatment of Africans in the European colonies, and justifiably so; in contrast, with regard to the ill treatment of Tamils in Ceylon, they did precious little. Writes Crocker: “...and with little done to save Indians in Ceylon from treatment which was worse than the treatment meted out to Africans in European colonies in Africa.”

But, that was typical of Nehru. He railed against the discrimination and savagery in distant lands—say, against blacks in South Africa—but remained conspicuously silent about our own people next door: against the Hindus in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), or against the Tamils in Sri Lanka. Because, the former required only talking; while the latter required action too!

If India had succeeded in doing the needful in the fifties, much of the trouble that Sri Lanka and the Tamils and the Sinhalese faced subsequently could have been avoided. It is in such cases that the statesmanship of a leader is tested.

Blunder-42 :
No to India's UNSC Membership

Both the US and the USSR were willing to accommodate India as a Permanent Member of the UNSC (United Nations Security Council) in 1955, in lieu of Taiwan, or as a sixth member, after amending the UN charter. This Nehru refused! Nehru wanted the seat to be given to PRC (Peoples Republic of China), as Nehru did not want China to be marginalised! It was almost as if Nehru, for reasons one cannot fathom, totally ignored India's own strategic interests!

Shashi Tharoor states in his book 'Nehru: The Invention of India': "Indian diplomats who have seen the files swear that at about the same time Jawaharlal also declined a US offer to take the permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council then held, with scant credibility, by Taiwan, urging that it be offered to Beijing instead... But it was one thing to fulminate against Great Power machinations, another to run a national foreign policy with little regard to the imperatives of power or the need of a country to bargain from a position of strength."

Reads a *Business Line* article '*UN reforms—a fading mirage?*' of 16 September 2009:

"Ironically, around 1955, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru was offered the disputed Chinese Permanent Security Council seat by the US to keep out the People's Republic of China, and he also was sounded out by the USSR Prime Minister, Nikolai Bulganin, to allow China to take this seat while giving India a sixth permanent seat in the Security Council. Nehru rejected this offer in deference to China. History may have been different if this offer had been subjected to serious negotiations. Through the decades since, we have been struggling for this seat."

Blunder-43 :
Advocating UN/UNSC seat for China

Even though never requested by China, India had been voluntarily and vigorously advocating PRC for the Permanent Membership of the UNSC in lieu of Taiwan! India lobbied with all nations for the UN membership and UNSC permanent seat, not for itself, but for China!

Even though China had invaded Tibet, KM Panikkar, the Indian Ambassador in Beijing, stated that to protest the Chinese invasion of Tibet would be an interference to India's efforts on behalf of China in the UN! That is, complaining against China on behalf of Tibet would show China in bad light—as an aggressor—when it was more important for India to ensure China's entry into the UN, for which India had been trying, and ensure that this effort of India was not thwarted by taking up China's Tibet aggression! What kind of crazy Nehruvian foreign policy was this? Our own national security interests and the interests of Tibet were sought to be sacrificed to help China enter the UN!!

An article on the web states: “Later, in a note on his tour of the USSR and other countries, dated August 1, 1955, Nehru wrote: ‘Informally, suggestions have been made by the United States that China should be taken into the United Nations but not in the Security Council and that India should take her place in the Security Council. We cannot of course accept this as it means falling out with China and it would be very unfair for a great country like China not to be in the Security Council. We have, therefore, made it clear to those who suggested this that we cannot agree to this suggestion. We have even gone a little further and said that India is not anxious to enter the Security Council at this stage, even though as a great country she ought to be there. The first step to be taken is for China to take her rightful place and then the question of India might be considered separately.’”

Blunder-44 :
Letting Go of Gwadar

Gwadar is a port-city on the Arabian Sea on the south-western coast of Baluchistan province in Pakistan. It is located opposite Oman across the sea, near the border with Iran, and to the east of the Persian Gulf. Gwadar is warm-water, deep-sea port, and it has a strategic location between South Asia, Central Asia and West Asia at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, just outside the Straits of Hormuz. The operations of Gwadar's strategic sea port were handed over by Pakistan to China in 2013. Now, thanks to the Chinese money and expertise, Gwadar is all set to emerge as Pakistan's third largest port.

Gwadar was not owned by the British at the time of independence. Gwadar was an overseas possession of the Sultanate of Muscat and Oman—it was given as a gift to Oman by the Khan of Kalat in 1783—until Pakistan purchased the territory on 8 September 1958. Pakistan assumed its control on 8 December 1958, and the territory was later integrated into Baluchistan province on 1 July 1970 as Gwadar District.

Oman was on good terms with India, and Sultan of Oman had offered to sell Gwadar to India for mere one million US dollars. However, India under Nehru did not take the offer, and let go of such an excellent strategic location. It was ultimately purchased by Pakistan on 8 September 1958 for three million US dollars.

It had the great potential of a deep water port (which China is now exploiting), but India/Nehru didn't have the foresight to appreciate its critical benefit. Even if India/Nehru didn't see much use of the place then as a deep water port, India should have acquired it, so that it could have been used as a bargaining chip with Pakistan, vis-à-vis Kashmir and other matters.

In hindsight, not accepting the priceless gift from the Sultan of Oman was a huge mistake at par with the long list of post-independence strategic blunders by Nehru.

Blunder-45 : **Erroneous Nehru-Era Map**

An error in the Indian maps shows territory as large as Sikkim or Goa in Arunachal Pradesh as belonging to China. The error has yet to be corrected.

Extracts below from an article by Madhav Nalapat in *The Sunday Guardian* of 23 August 2014 are self-explanatory:

“Prime Minister Manmohan Singh rejected an August 2013 request by senior officials in his government to correct a serious error, dating back over 50 years, in India's official maps. In effect, this oversight in official maps mistakenly gave China control of two Arunachal Pradesh “fishtails”, a territory as large as Sikkim or Goa, and continuously inhabited by Indian citizens...

“...The two ‘fishtail’ formations in Arunachal Pradesh were omitted from maps prepared by the Survey of India during the 1960s, although the area has always been under the control of India. No public records exist as to why and how such a significant error was made. In 1962, recognising the fact that this territory was Indian, soldiers from the People's Liberation Army of China, who had occupied the fishtails during November 1962, withdrew after the unilateral ceasefire declared by Beijing that month.

““Since then and before, the area within the two fishtails has always been occupied by our troops, as well as by the Mishmi tribe, all of whom are citizens of India. Our claim on the territory is incontestable and our maps ought to have been updated to reflect this,’ a senior official stated.

“...Asked as to why official maps did not reflect the fact of the ‘fishtails’ being Indian territory, the reply was that ‘as the mistake took place during Nehru's time, it was felt that correcting the maps formally would draw attention to this mistake on the part of the then Prime Minister and thereby tarnish his name’.

“A retired official claimed that ‘every government has protected Nehru's reputation by refusing to make public facts dating from the 1940s that they saw as damaging to the image of Nehru’. He and a former colleague saw Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's 2013 refusal to formally change the map (a decision taken ‘after consultations with the political authority’) as part of the effort to protect the reputation of Jawaharlal Nehru by refusing to make public any details of his failures, including the decision to keep secret the Henderson-Brooks Report on the 1962 war, or to draw attention to Nehru's failures even by the necessary step of rectifying them.

“Interestingly, the fact that maps showed the two ‘fishtails’ as being outside Indian territory was, according to a senior (and now retired) official, ‘brought to the attention of then Home Minister P. Chidambaram by the (then) Director-General of the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) in 2010, along with reports of Chinese troops entering the area in 2011 and 2012, but the response was to do nothing’...”

Blunder-46 : Nehru & Israel

On 29 November 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted on the modified UN Partition Plan of Palestine that effectively included creation of Israel for the Jews.

Most (33) nations voted in favour, but India along with 12 others, that included 10 Muslim nations, voted against the plan! There were 10 abstentions and 1 absent. Abstentions included Republic of China and Yugoslavia.

A nation which got independence only a few months earlier on 15 August 1947 after having suffered foreign domination, ignominy, insult to its culture and religion and back-breaking exploitation for over 1000 years and knew in a miserably hard way what it was like to be at the receiving end should have valued independence or creation of another nation, especially those for Jews, who richly-deserved it—from all possible angles. Jews had suffered for centuries like the Hindus had suffered, though much longer. We should have had empathy for them.

But, Nehru? What can one say of his convoluted thinking, defective world-view and faulty approach! India could have at least abstained from voting, rather than voting against.

India under Nehru was amongst the first nations to recognise PRC (People's Republic of China) when Communists took over in 1949; but when it came to Israel, Nehru did not recognise it as a nation till September 1950, even though it was established on 14 May 1948, and most nations of the world had recognised it!

While Nehru campaigned for admission of China to the UN and even into the UNSC, sacrificing its own chances; India not only voted against the UN resolution of 1947 that had the effect of creating Israel, but also voted against Israel's admission in the UN in 1949.

Nehru could recognise China's sovereignty over Tibet, which had an adverse impact on India, but not build relations with Israel, with which India had much in common, and relations with whom would have been very helpful in various fields.

Indira Gandhi, like her father, and Rajiv Gandhi, like her mother, maintained their distance from Israel. It was left to the wise non-Dynasty Prime Minister Narsimha Rao to establish formal relations with Israel in 1992.

It is worth noting that despite Nehru-Indira Dynasty's unjust treatment of

Israel, Israel helped India in whatever manner it could in India's multiple wars with its neighbours. India sought and got arms from Israel both in the 1962 India-China war and in the 1971 Bangladesh war.

What Nehru-Indira Dynasty did was driven by their self-interest of vote-bank politics at the cost of the nation. Whenever non-Dynasty governments have been in power, the relationship with Israel have been better.

Despite severe lack of natural resources, wars, and enemies on all sides, the new nation of Israel created only in 1948 became a shining first-world nation within a few decades, while India under the Nehru dynasty remained a poor, miserable, third-rate, third-world country.

India's relationship with Israel are getting better, and are likely to improve further, under the current dispensation. Israel has been supplying us critical military and security equipments. Its modern and innovative agricultural practices are worth emulating by India. India must fully support Israel in the UN.

For details on Israel and India-Israel relationship please check the blog-series by the author at <http://rajnikantp.blogspot.in/2014/10/israel-jews-i-faqs-truths-fascinating.html> .

Blunder-47 :
‘Non-Aligned’ with National Interests

Rather than having strong allies on its side to deter others, India, thanks to Nehru's self-defeating foreign policies, remained non-aligned so that Pakistan (aligned with the West) and China (aligned with the USSR) felt free to attack India, knowing it to be a non-risky business as no country would come to the rescue of a non-aligned India in its hours of distress. In the India-China War of 1962, even the non-aligned nations—Nehru's friends—didn't come out to support or help India.

Common sense dictated that till you became strong enough to defend yourself, have sensible pacts with some strong nations to take care of your security.

Non-aligned policy fetched no gains for India. If India had aligned itself with the US and the West, not only would India have been much better off economically, China would not have dared to attack India, nor would Pakistan have either attacked Kashmir or played mischief in J&K. Further, the UK and the USA would not have favoured Pakistan over India on Kashmir, and the Kashmir issue would have been solved in India's favour long ago.

Pakistan was much smarter. After its creation, its first PM Liaquat Ali Khan accepted an invitation from Moscow—deliberately. The purpose was to alarm the opposite side in the cold war: the US and the UK. Expectedly, the US and the UK made a deal with Pakistan: in return for Pakistan joining the Anglo-American Military bloc, they would support Pakistan on Kashmir and other matters against India.

All that non-alignment did was it helped project the image of Nehru on the world stage. It did precious little for India. In fact India grievously suffered from that stand. *In short, Nehru's policy of 'Non-Alignment' was not aligned to the Indian national interests.*

Blunder-48 : **Foreign to Foreign Policy**

The main reason Gandhi had made Nehru India's first PM was his notion that Nehru had good international exposure and expertise in foreign affairs, and he would project India well on the international stage.

People eulogise Nehru for his expertise in international affairs, and credit him as the founder of India's foreign policy. Founder he was, but were the foundations solid? Or, were they rickety? Or, were there no foundations at all? Was it all airy ad-hocism, and one-man's-pontifications? Crucially, was it a foreign policy that benefited India? Or, was it merely a device for Nehru for self-posturing and to project himself internationally?

If ours was a good foreign policy, how come all our major neighbours became our enemies? And, a friendly neighbour, Tibet, disappeared as an independent nation? How come all our borders turned insecure during the Nehruvian era, costing us a fortune to defend them? How come no nation came to India's rescue (including Nehru's non-aligned friends) in its war with China, except the nation Nehru and Krishna Menon always panned—the United States; or the nation Nehru refused to recognise—Israel?

You evaluate a policy by its results, not by its verbosity and pompousness.

BR Ambedkar criticised Nehru's foreign policy for trying to "solve the problems of other countries and not [exerting] to solve the problems of our own country!"

Wasn't it ironic that Nehru internationalised a matter he should not have, while he refused to internationalise a matter that he should have. He referred J&K—an internal, domestic matter—to the UN, which he should not have internationalised; while he refused to refer the Tibet-issue—a serious, external security matter—to the UN, which he should have.

Nehru, thanks to his inexplicably adamant and unreasonable approach, ended up creating and complicating India-China border problem and allowed it to drift into an unfortunate war.

Nehru rooted India's foreign policy in abstract ideas rather than a strategic conception of national interests. He disdained alliances, pacts, and treaties, seeing them as part of the old rules of realpolitik, and was uninterested in military matters... Nehru tended to put hope above calculation. When he was warned that Communist China would probably seek to annex Tibet, for example,

he doubted it, arguing that it would be foolish and impractical adventure. And even after Beijing did annex Tibet in 1951, Nehru would not reassess the nature of Chinese interests along India's northern border...

—Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World*

Nehru campaigned for China's entry in the UN, and for making it a member of the UN Security Council! And, let go our own chance of becoming a member of the UN Security Council!! He thus jeopardised our critical national security interests. No country with a mature and prudent foreign policy would engage in a *massive give-away like* India did under the *Panchsheel* in 1954 and the *Indus Water Treaty* in 1960, with zero reciprocity—without getting anything in return.

Walter Crocker writes in 'Nehru: A Contemporary's Estimate': "He [Nehru] insisted on keeping the portfolio of external affairs for himself. It was a disadvantage to him that he did so, because, as head of the whole government of India, he had to deal with a range of internal problems already too much for one mind. And it was a disadvantage to the Indian foreign office and the Indian diplomatic service. In effect he did damage to both, and at a formative and impressionable stage of their growth..."

Internal Security

Blunder-49 :

Compounding Difficulties in Assam

In the pre-independence blunder, “Blunder-5: Assam’s Security Compromised”, detailed earlier, we saw how Nehru’s wrong decision ultimately resulted in adverse demographic change in Assam, with the influx of Muslims from East Bengal.

In the 1930s and later, when the Muslims of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) began migrating to Brahmaputra valley in Assam for livelihood, pooh-poohing the grave warnings from sane quarters, pseudo-secular, naive Nehru made an irresponsible statement: “Nature abhors vacuum, meaning where there is open space how can one prevent people from settling there?” Savarkar responded with his masterly prediction: “Nature also abhors poisonous gas. The migration of such large numbers of Muslims in Assam threatened not just the local culture but would also prove to be a national security problem for India on its north-east frontier.”

Taking note of that, any nationalist, concerned about the fate of the indigenous people, their property, their well-being and their culture in Assam, would have ensured that the Muslims migrations from East Bengal were stemmed at least after independence, with the power in our hands. Unfortunately, even after independence, when the Central Government could have taken a tough stand and effectively dealt with the problem, it remained ostrich-like, and demographic invasion from East-Pakistan continued, becoming a major source of ethnic bitterness and tension. The ongoing Bodo-Bangladeshi Muslim clash is an offshoot of this bitterness.

The adverse situation continued. Not just out of negligence, but out of design too. What became paramount for the Congress and Nehru after independence were votes—votes even at the cost of national interests. Muslim migrants swelled their vote bank. Why not then turn a blind eye to it, even if the people of Assam and the Northeast ultimately suffer! And, all that despite severe opposition of many local Congress leaders like Gopinath Bordoloi and Medhi. The effectively anti-national vote-bank politics of the Congress is not a recent phenomenon, or something since the times of unscrupulous Indira Gandhi, it started soon after independence under Nehru.

“The state subsequently paid the price...when illegal migration from the then East Pakistan reduced the Assamese-speaking population in Assam to a minority... It was not Chaliha who initiated the issue of illegal migration but his senior in the Congress, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmad, who rose to be India’s president. In fact, the entire party was guilty. Its simplistic solution was to win elections in Assam by allowing would-be settlers from across the border into the state thus creating a vote bank...[Gobind Ballabh]Pant [the then Home Minister in Nehru’s cabinet] knew that large number of people were coming across the border. After all, his party had connived at the migration since independence...”

—Kuldip Nayar, *‘Beyond the Lines’*

The problems of Assam and the Northeast have their roots in the Nehruvian era on account of faulty understanding of the issues, distorted world view, defective grasp of national security interests, and the faulty policies and remedies that flowed from them. Nehru, thanks to his policies, managed to make all our international borders and the regions in the border areas sensitive and insecure, costing us a fortune to maintain them. Nehru could have and should have put in place a reliable and robust mechanism to plug the migrations from East-Pakistan after Independence; but he remained casual and indifferent.

Blunder-50 : **Neglecting the Northeast**

The problems of the Northeast have their roots in the Nehruvian era on account of faulty understanding of the issues, distorted world view, defective grasp of national security interests, and the faulty policies and remedies that flowed from them. Also, no-holds-barred proselytization by the Christian missionaries dealt with in the next blunder.

Nehru's policy of division of Assam into a number of smaller states to satisfy certain ethnic groups has actually been counter-productive.

One, because there are so many different ethnicities—over 220 ethnic groups. To what extent can one keep dividing?

Two, it started divisive identity politics. Others too have raised their demand for separation.

Three, such small states are not economically viable.

Egged on by Verrier Elwin, Nehru's advisor on tribal matters and a British missionary and anthropologist, Nehru's broad policy was to treat Nagas and the like as "anthropological specimen". This came in the way of development and integration of the Northeast.

Looking to the fact of scores of ethnic groups and languages in the Northeast, Nehru should have understood that sub-dividing the region into multiple states would be an endless process that would give rise to further divisiveness, without doing any good for the people at large, each new state being economically unviable.

What would have won the hearts of the people and brought them into the mainstream would have been not a State for each group, for that benefits only the elites; but solid, good, empathetic governance, effective criminal-justice system, assurance of security to people, delivery of services, education, health-care, providing connectivity and communications, putting in place adequate infrastructure, and economic development.

But, that requires dedicated, committed, competent, empathetic and honest human resources, ensuring which should have been the top-priority task of independent India. But, no. The arrogant, callous, selfish, self-serving, exploitive, rent-seeking, corrupt, anti-people babudom and the criminal-justice system continued, and rather than being replaced or reformed, became worse and vicious, as amply brought out by Ved Marwah in his book 'India in Turmoil'.

In short, Nehru did little to spruce up the administration and the criminal-justice system. Secondly, with socialism as the Nehruvian creed, India had condemned itself to poverty, want and international beggary, and had neither the surplus to invest in development, nor policies to promote private investments and foreign investments.

The NE states are unable to take care of either their development or their expenses. All the states have been categorised as Special Category States: they get 90% of the funds as grants from the Centre, and have to only generate the remaining 10%. In other words, all are totally dependent upon the Centre for their expenditure for salaries of government employees, maintenance, and development.

The PCB nexus (“P” for politicians, “C” for contractors, and “B” for businessmen and bureaucrats), and in many regions the PCBI nexus (PCB plus “I” for insurgents) takes care of major portion of the funds. Without ensuring proper end-use of funds, the Central Government keeps announcing special economic packages for the region, most of which go to line the pockets of the PCBI. Continued militancy, and need for development to tackle it, provide a convenient pretext to get more and more funds to loot.

Blunder-51 :
Ignoring Illegal Proselytization

It is impossible for me to reconcile myself to the idea of conversion after the style that goes on in India and elsewhere today. It is an error which is perhaps the greatest impediment to the world's progress toward peace. Why should a Christian want to convert a Hindu to Christianity? Why should he not be satisfied if the Hindu is a good or godly man?

—Mahatma Gandhi, Harijan: January 30, 1937

Religion is important for humanity, but it should evolve with humanity. The first priority is to establish and develop the principle of pluralism in all religious traditions. If we, the religious leaders, cultivate a sincere pluralistic attitude, then everything will be more simple. It is good that most religious leaders are at least beginning to recognize other traditions, even though they may not approve of them. The next step is to accept that the idea of propagating religion is outdated. It no longer suits the times.

—HH Dalai Lama

Nehru turned a blind eye to illegal and rampant proselytization by the Christian missionaries that adversely affected national interests.

Writes Durga Das in ‘India from Curzon to Nehru & After’ (Rupa, Page# 274): “The Constitution-makers swept under the carpet the important matter relating to the scheduled tribes in the Assam hills in the north-east. They adopted a formula virtually placing the region outside the pale of normal Union laws and administrative apparatus. Nehru did this on the advice of Christian missionaries. His colleagues in the top echelons let it pass, treating the matter, in the words of Azad, as ‘a Nehru fad’.”

It is worth noting that Sir Reginald Coupland (1884–1952), a historian and a professor of the Oxford University who had accompanied the Cripps Mission as an adviser in 1942, had recommended for a statutory guarantee that the work of the Christian missions in the hill tracts of Assam (Assam then included all the NE states) would continue uninterrupted.

Massive conversions in the Northeast states, particularly Nagaland and Mizoram, have led to secessionist movements.

Christian missionaries and a number of foreign-funded NGOs have deliberately propagated and funded the myths of Aryan-Dravidian conflicts and differences. They have been active in anti-Brahmanical and anti-Hindu

propaganda. They have taken advantage of the poverty and wants of the dalits and the tribals. Why? All this helps them in conversions. It is they who have fuelled Aryan-Dravidian politics in Tamil Nadu to help them in their proselytization project. It is necessary to realise that conversions (at least over 99% of them) to Christianity or Islam are actually spiritual murders more heinous than physical murders, as they unhinge a person from her roots.

It seems Nehru did not understand the correlation among religion, nation, partition, and divisiveness; despite being a witness to creation of Pakistan. It may be fine to be personally an atheist, or agnostic, or above religion; but it is definitely foolish and irresponsible, as a national leader, to ignore the reality of religions, particularly the latter two Abrahamic religions, and their effect on people and regions and their potential for divisiveness. There are 126 Christian-majority, and 49 Muslim-majority countries in the world, but just one Hindu-majority country—that is, India (leaving the tiny country Nepal). Is it not an Indian leader's responsibility to ensure that at least one country remains Hindu-majority, and safe for Hindus, and to which persecuted Hindus elsewhere in the world (like in Pakistan and Bangladesh, and, sadly, even from its own state of Kashmir) could seek refuge. Isn't it the least that Hindus, who have suffered a millennium of slavery and prosecution at the hands of Muslims and Christians, must expect from the Indian leaders. People of other religions must, of course, have full freedom as equal citizens; but they can't be allowed to dominate, illegally proselytize, and displace the Hindu majority.

Christian missionaries and their illegal proselytization has created havoc in many parts of India, and it is high time India woke up to them and took effective counter measures. Nehru dynasty never cared about India's religious and cultural foundations and heritage, but non-Dynasty governments need to act differently.

Proselytization in India has been solely for economic reasons, and to a lesser extent on account of societal reasons. Religion or spiritualism, or 'seeking God', or appreciating that the religion one is converting into is "better", has nothing whatsoever to do with it. Hence, all conversions are illegal (barring perhaps 0.01%). There is, of course, no question of the two latter Abrahamic religions, the "religion of compassion", and the "religion of peace", which have caused terrible and indescribable miseries to uncountable millions of locals belonging to other faiths in Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, South America, and Australia through the centuries, being superior or the only true religions. None can come even remotely near to the essential Hinduism. There can, therefore, be

no conversion through rational analysis and conviction.

Conversions actually got a fillip thanks to the Nehruvian policies. If you have chosen the socialist path, which benefits only the politicians and the babus, poor can never really come up. Deprived of medical facilities, free education, other necessities, and even food, they become easy targets for conversion. Had India followed free-market policies, India would have been a prosperous first-world nation, with better administration and justice, long ago; leaving little scope for illegal conversions.

Blunder-52 : **Insecurity of the Vulnerable Sections**

Among the very basics expected from any government is safety for its citizens, particularly the vulnerable sections like the minorities, dalits, women and children. This is fundamental. Other things come later. People should not feel vulnerable to communal, caste, gender or domestic violence. They should be able to breathe freely and live fearlessly—otherwise what is the point of gaining “independence”.

Safety is what independent India should have firmly ensured within the first five to ten years of its existence. Not a difficult goal to achieve at all, given the desire and the will. The safety and social justice should have been ensured whatever it took: persuasion, education, publicity, unbiased and empathetic governance and criminal-justice system—even violence where needed.

However, post independence, there was no change, rather, there was a change for the worse. The heartless anti-weak, anti-poor and corrupt criminal-justice-police system continued as in the colonial days. There was no reform or replacement. Minorities, dalits, women and children continued to remain highly vulnerable. There were reportedly 243 communal riots between 1947 and 1964 and there was little improvement in the lot of the Dalits.

For a political leader, is it sufficient to be personally non-communal, but do little to ensure communal harmony? If communal riots continue to take place, if the minorities, the dalits and the weaker sections continue to be on the receiving end, what's the use of your being personally non-communal or pro-weaker sections. The real test of secularism for a leader and for his empathies with the weak is what did he achieve on the ground. India and its rulers since independence cut a sorry figure on this aspect.

This is what Dr Ambedkar had to say in his resignation letter (from the Nehru's cabinet) of 27 September 1951: “What is the Scheduled Castes [status] today? So far as I see, it is the same as before. The same old tyranny, the same old oppression, the same old discrimination which existed before, exists now, and perhaps in a worst form. I can refer to hundreds of cases where people from the Scheduled Caste round about Delhi and adjoining places have come to me with their tales of woes against the Caste Hindus and against the Police who have refused to register their complaints and render them any help. I have been wondering whether there is any other parallel in the world to the condition of Scheduled Castes in India. I cannot find any. And yet why is no relief granted

to the Scheduled Castes? Compare the concern the Government shows over safeguarding the Muslims. The Prime Minister's whole time and attention is devoted for the protection of the Muslims. I yield to none, not even to the Prime Minister, in my desire to give the Muslims of India the utmost protection wherever and whenever they stand in need of it. But what I want to know is, are the Muslims the only people who need protection? Are the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes... not in need of protection? What concern has he shown for these communities? So far as I know, none and yet these are the communities which need far more care and attention than the Muslims."

It was unfortunate that rather than working and co-ordinating with Dr Ambedkar to get rid of the curse of untouchability in India, and bring succour to the vulnerable sections, Nehru chose to get rid of Dr Ambedkar himself. Nehru even campaigned against him in elections to ensure his defeat! Dr Ambedkar was a multi-dimensional talent, and his services could have been used for many other critical areas too—he was academically and experience-wise most suited to become Finance Minister. It would actually have been great if Sardar Patel had been India's first PM, and after him, Dr Ambedkar.

Most Indians wish the communalism had been firmly curbed within a decade of independence, and secularism and communalism were made non-issues by 1957. Had Congress done the actual work on the ground of overhauling our criminal-justice-police system and babudom, launched vigorous educational campaign on the issue, held netas and those in administration and police accountable for disturbances and riots, punished the guilty and made examples of them, and adopted a non-compromising attitude to the issue, the curse of communalism and of ill-treatment of dalits would have vanished within a decade of independence. It was not an unachievable target. But, when you yourselves allocate seats and win elections on communal, religious and caste considerations, where is the remedy? Most of the so-called secular parties have been great talkers, but, non-doers. They want to keep the secular, communal and casteism pot boiling to win votes, because, in practical terms on the ground, they are incapable of solving any real issues.

In fact, this whole debate on parties, people and groups being secular or communal, casteist or otherwise, pro-dalit or anti-dalit, pro-women or male-chauvinists, traditionalist or modern, conservative or liberal is irrelevant to the issue of safety of vulnerable sections of the society, that is, minorities, dalits, women and children. The real issue is "governance", which includes enforcing "rule of law". Therefore, if a party claims to be secular, the touchstone of its

credentials is “governance”. If its “governance” is poor it is unfit to be called a “secular” party. Like one measures GDP, per-capita income, literacy, poverty, human development index (HDI), quality of living index and so on, one needs to measure GI, “Governance Index”, for each of the states and for the central government. It is this GI which would actually reflect the SI—“Secularism Index”. SI can’t be measured by your decibel levels and your protestations. It has to be measured by your real actions on the ground—a tough call.

Blunder-53 : **Ungoverned Areas**

Large swathes of tribal and other areas remained ignored, neglected and ungoverned during the Nehruvian era and later, leading ultimately to the huge Naxal-infested red corridor cutting across sections of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, and Bihar.

Further, it was not just tribal areas that were neglected and ungoverned. There were vast swathes of countryside and small towns in UP, Bihar and many other states that were, and remain, hopeless, depressing, lawless, dangerous *Omkaralands*.

Northeast was another region which was neglected, and left to be inundated with Muslims migrating from East Pakistan/Bangladesh, hugely and detrimentally disturbing and vitiating the political, cultural and religious lifestyle there leading to serious strife—creating problems where none previously existed. On top of it Nehru gave a carte blanche to the Christian missionaries to engage in illegal conversions with generous funding from abroad. With Christians in majority, and egged on by the missionaries and foreign forces, demands for independence from India began to be made.

What is the root cause? Dirty politics, colonial babudom and misgovernance. In fact, wherever there has been the Indian government outreach into these areas, it has been more to exploit and make money than to serve and provide services.

Further, Nehruvian socialism meant economic stagnation, and no surplus to enable deployment of resources or investments in the so-called ungoverned areas, nor policies to encourage private investments for infrastructure in those areas.

Economy

Blunder-54 : **Throttled Industrialisation**

Stress only on the public sector and restrictions on private sector throttled growth in industrialisation and employment during the era of Nehru dynasty.

Not learning anything from Japan and others, who had dramatically prospered with their outward-looking, export-led growth, India under Nehru went in for inward-looking, import-substitution model, denying itself a world-class, competitive culture, incentive for production of quality products, share in the world-trade, and the consequent prosperity. Instead, India invested heavily in the inefficient public sector, over-regulated and strangled private enterprise, and shunned foreign capital.

Many industries were barred for the private sector. When entrepreneurs in the countries in Southeast Asia, like South Korea, were being encouraged to expand and set up industries and their government was offering them cheap credit, here in India we were doing the opposite: GD Birla was refused a license for setting up a steel plant; scores of business proposals of Tatas were rejected; Aditya Birla, looking to the hostile business environment in India, chose to set up industries outside India; ...the list is endless.

Gurcharan Das mentions in '*India Unbound*' of Kasturbhai Lalbhai establishing Atul chemical plant in collaboration with American Cyanamid in the wilds of Gujarat, building a whole township, and provided jobs to many tribals. When invited to inaugurate it in 1952, Nehru agreed after considerable reluctance. Why? Because, it was in the private sector!

Blunder-55 : **Neglect of Agriculture**

Nehru and his team were seemingly innocent of the basics of economics that without a prosperous agriculture, you can't have agricultural surplus, and without that, you can't feed the growing urban population and sustain industrialisation. Yet, they neglected agriculture, which adversely affected industrialisation, and resulted in mass poverty.

Neglect of agriculture resulted in famines, and turned India into a nation of hungry millions, and an international beggar.

Most countries like Japan and others who rapidly progressed and joined the first-world, first concentrated on agriculture and universal education. Nehru neglected both. Nehru copied the Soviets, without realising that all communist countries faced famines thanks to their stress on heavy industries at the expense of agriculture.

I had quarrelled with him [Nehru] regarding his neglect of the village economy, especially agriculture, and protested to him about his almost total neglect of irrigation which was the key to Indian agriculture... Nehru told me disparagingly, 'You are a villager, you know nothing.' I retorted, 'If you had one-tenth of my regard for the village, the Indian economy would have been different.'...I am not sure if he had any convictions, except for aping the Russian model.

—S. Nijalingappa, 'My Life and Politics'

Copycat Nehru's another fad was cooperative farming—trying things on the lines of Russia. Genuine farmer-politicians like Charan Singh opposed it. The policy miserably failed, and was finally abandoned by the Congress.

Blunder-56 :
‘Builder of Modern India’

Admirers claim Nehru was the builder of modern India. Is one referring to “modern” India with broken-down, side-lane-like highways, run-down Fiats and Ambassadors, meagre second world-war armaments to take care of its security, perennial food shortages, famines, millions in grinding poverty, both hands holding begging bowls? He did set up a string of research labs, but they did little, and became money sinks.

Pathetic communication networks and transport severely affected economic growth, fight against poverty, mobility and national integration.

Many countries, including those in Southeast Asia, which were much behind India at the time India got independence, marched far ahead of India. When you look at their airports, their roads, their metros, their city-buses, their well laid-out cities, their infra-structure, their cleanliness, their everything, you wonder why you have remained a country of crumbling roads, overcrowded locals, overhanging scary ugly mess of mesh of electrical, TV and internet cables blotting the skyline and brutally assaulting even the “chalta hai” sense of terribly intolerable tolerance of the “have given up” generations; a country of absent pavements or encroached pavements or pavements that stink from the use they are not meant for, and where mercifully for the walkers this is not so, they are but patches of broken down pavers, punctuated by uncovered, or partially covered, or precariously or deceptively covered man-holes, awaiting their catch; a nation of stinking slums and impoverished villages, open drains and sewers, rotting garbage, squalor and stink all around, children and men defecating by the road-side—all testimony to criminal absence of the very basics of being civilised...

Most of the Indian towns, cities and metros are dirty, foul smelling and hideous. They look like a defacement of spaces and a blot on the landscape. Cities in the West, Southeast Asia, China and elsewhere get better, cleaner, smarter and spiffier year after year, while ours get worse, more congested, more difficult to live in and more squalid.

How's it that we got so left behind? What is it that we did, or did not do, after independence, that everything is so abysmal and pathetic? And all this unmitigated misery despite the overwhelming advantage of India as a nation with first-rate people, plentiful natural resources, grand civilisational heritage, rich culture and languages, unmatched ethical and spiritual traditions, and, above

all, relatively better position in all fields—infrastructure, trained manpower, bureaucracy, army—at the time of independence compared to all other nations who have since overtaken us.

Why did we fail to leverage such rich assets of a gifted country? Well, all thanks to Nehruvian policies. Nehruvianism is responsible for keeping India forever a developing, third-world country.

The question is: Can a country attain greatness even if its leaders are Lilliputs; and vice versa, can the country's leaders be considered great even if the country goes to dogs—or remains wretchedly poor and achieves only a fraction of what it could have?

As a conundrum it could hardly be bigger. Six decades of laudably fair elections, a free press, rule of law and much else should have delivered rulers who are responsive to the ruled. India's development record, however, is worse than poor. If democracy works there, why are so many Indian lives still so wretched? Social indicators leave that in no doubt. A massive blackout last summer caught global attention, yet 400m Indians had (and still have) no electricity...Twice as many Indian children (43%) as African ones go hungry...Compared even with its poorer neighbours, Bangladesh and Nepal, India's social record is unusually grim...

—The Economist, 29 June 2013

Blunder-57 :
Grinding Poverty & Pathetic Living Conditions

Thanks to the Nehruvian economic policies, millions of Indians were condemned to grinding poverty.

We have the largest number of poor—a third of the world's poor! As per the World Bank's estimate, while 69% Indians live on less than US\$2 per day, 33% fall below the international poverty line of US\$1.25 per day. In terms of GDP per capita, India stands at 129 among 183 countries as per IMF tabulation for 2011. Per capita income in India is little more than half that of Sri Lanka, about a sixth that of Malaysia, and a third that of Jamaica. Things have been improving, but precious decades were lost in poverty-perpetuating Nehruvian economic policies.

Says Darryl D'Monte in an article, *Living off the land*, that appeared in the Hindustan Times: "...Oxford University and the UN Development Programme brought out a *Multidimensional Poverty Index* or MPI which replaced the Human Poverty Index. The researchers analysed data from 104 countries with a combined population of 5.2 billion, constituting 78% of the world's total. It found that about 1.7 billion people in these countries live in multidimensional poverty. If income alone is taken into account, at less than \$1.25 a day, a standard measure throughout the world, this amounts to 1.3 billion. The startling fact that emerges from this analysis, which made headlines throughout the world, is that using the MPI, just eight Indian states have more poor people than the 26 poorest African countries combined. These sub-Saharan countries—like Ethiopia—are considered the worst-off in the world, with pictures of starving children there becoming symptomatic of a deep malaise."

Worldwide rankings for 2012 by the Mercer Quality of Living Survey lists 49 cities. No Indian city makes the grade. Mercer City Infrastructure Ranking, 2012 lists 50 cities. No Indian city appears in the list. Among the prominent cities in the world, the 25 dirtiest include New Delhi and Mumbai having mostly the African cities for company.

Two cities in India, Sukinda and Vapi, rank 3rd and 4th in the world as the most polluted cities! Even our water bodies and rivers, including the most sacred ones, get dirtier by the year. The sacred rivers have been reduced to sewers. The waters of the Ganga are pure and sparkling when it starts from Gangotri, with a BOD, that is, Biochemical Oxygen Demand, of zero, and a DO, Dissolved Oxygen, of over 10. Water with BOD level of less than 2mg per litre can be

consumed without treatment; that with BOD level between 2 and 3 mg per litre can be consumed, but only after treatment; and that with BOD level above 3 mg per litre is unfit even for bathing. Ganga-Yamuna water at Sangam in Allahabad has a BOD level of 7.3 mg per litre! It is totally unfit even for bathing!!

To summarise a ToI report, "A pitcherful of poison: India's water woes set to get worse", India ranks third-lowest, a lowly 120, in a list of 122 countries rated on quality of potable water. By 2020, India is likely to become a water-stressed nation. Nearly 50% of Indian villages still do not have any source of protected drinking water. Of the 1.42 million villages in India, 1.95 lacs are affected by chemical contamination of water. 37.7 million are afflicted by waterborne diseases every year. Nearly 66 million people in 20 Indian states are at risk because of excessive fluoride in their water. Nearly 6 million children below 14 suffer from dental, skeletal and non-skeletal fluorosis. In Jhabua district, bone deformities are common among children. Arsenic is the other big killer lurking in ground water, putting at risk nearly 10 million people. The problem is acute in several districts of West Bengal. The deeper aquifers in the entire Gangetic plains contain arsenic. In UP's Ballia district, the problem is so acute that almost every family has been affected—most people are suffering from skin rashes, some have lost their limbs; many are dying a slow death due to arsenic-induced cancer. Bacteriological contamination, which leads to diarrhoea, cholera and hepatitis, is most widespread in India.

The HDI, *Human Development Index*, is a composite statistic of life expectancy, education, and income indices and was published by the UNDP, United Nations Development Programme. In 2016, India ranked 130 on HDI among 187 countries, below even Iraq and Egypt!

The Hunger and Malnutrition (HUNGaMA) report by the Naandi Foundation points out that 42 per cent of under-fives Indian children are severely or moderately underweight and that 59 per cent of them suffer from moderate to severe stunting.

As per another study released on *Mother's Day*, India ranks 76th among 80 "less developed countries" in the world on Mother-care Index, that is 5th worst.

Health-care system—we beat even the poorest countries in Africa in infant mortality rates! The rate is a measure of number of deaths of infants under one year old in a given year per 1,000 live births. Among 221 countries, India ranks 50—rank 1 being the worst—with an infant mortality rate of 46. That is, among 221 countries, 171 countries are better off than India. China's infant mortality

rate is 15.62, Singapore's 2.65, while India's is 46.07. Over 400,000 newborns die within the first 24 hours of their birth every year in India, the highest anywhere in the world, a study by an international non-government organisation, "Save the Children", has declared.

Take MMR, the Maternal Mortality Rate, which is the annual number of female deaths per 100,000 live births from any cause related to or aggravated by pregnancy or its management. The MMR includes deaths during pregnancy, childbirth, or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy. India ranks 52—rank 1 being the worst—among 183 countries, with an MMR of 200 deaths per 100,000 live births. MMR is 37 for China and just 3 for Singapore.

Take housing. Government's recent housing survey reveals that 53% of Indian homes are without toilets, 68% are without access to clean tap water, 39% do not have indoor kitchens, and 70% make do with one or two room homes. Figures don't reveal the real horror. Of course, all—men, women and children—suffer; but, the main sufferers are women: having to defecate in the open in the absence of toilets, having to fetch water in the absence of tap-water at home, having to cook without a kitchen!

There are nearly 97 million urban poor living in 50,000 slums in India, 24% of which are located along nallahs and drains and 12% along railway lines. And, thanks to our lack of planning and neglect, the number of slums and the slum population is on the rise. The worst affected are the children—our future—in these slums.

Singapore and Finland recruit teachers in schools from among the brightest 10% of graduates and offer them salaries on par with engineers. And, in India?

Quality of graduates from engineering and management colleges is so poor many remain unemployable. Our education system—it is a mess.

In literacy, India is 183 among 214 countries—below many African countries. Reports *The Economic Times* of 18 January 2013: "The Annual Status of Education Report (ASER 2012) by NGO Pratham shows that the number of Class V students who could not read a Class II level text or solve a simple arithmetic problem has increased. In 2010, 46.3% of kids in this category failed to make the cut and this shot up to 51.8% in 2011 and 53.2% in 2012...In 2010, 29.1% children in Class V could not solve a two-digit subtraction problem without seeking help. This proportion increased to 39% in 2011 and 46.5% in 2012."

The hitherto Dynasty-driven Nehruvian-socialistic-populist-babudom-

dominated dynacritic India rarely disappoints in scoring the top grade—when it comes to the negatives. With the change of guard and exit of the Nehru-Gandhi Dynasty the things are likely to improve.

Blunder-58 :
Socialistic-Bureaucratic Nightmare

Nehru uncritically accepted socialism. It is strange that while Nehru's books approvingly talk of Marxism and socialism, there is no comparative analysis by him of much more proven competing economic thoughts. It was as if Adam Smith, Alfred Marshall, JS Mill, John Maynard Keynes and others did not exist for Nehru. Nor did he care to read Milton Friedman (1912–2006) or Friedrich Hayek (1899–1992).

*“To cure the British disease with socialism was like
trying to cure leukemia with leeches.”*

—Margaret Thatcher

Marxists call their socialism *scientific* socialism, as if the self-assigned, self-adulatory adjective *scientific* is sufficient to testify to it being *scientific*—correct; however preposterous it might be from a genuine scientific angle, where the litmus test is the real practical proof. Mere dialectics of self-serving arguments and logic does not result in truth! Marxism and socialism as a science or as an alternate economic thought for a nation to build on has miserably failed—it has globally been proven wrong both in theory and in practice.

Those who do not genuinely understand science or scientific-methods are taken-in by mere allusion to something as *scientific*. Many became Marxists because being so implied being *scientific*-spirited, rational, progressive, pro-poor intellectual, aligned to the forces of history! Rather than being aligned to the forces of history or being on the right side of it, to the dismay of the Marxists, the unfolding history proved them to be on the wrong side; and their “science”—“scientific” socialism—turned out to be an alchemy!

The capitalist economic thought, the capitalist societies and the associated democratic system themselves evolved and adapted since the time of Marx in such a way that they not only brought unprecedented prosperity to the concerned nations, they also significantly uplifted the status of the masses—falsifying, in the process, many of the foundations and assumptions of Marx.

In science, society, economics and indeed all disciplines knowledge evolves, concepts change, new theories replace old ones in the light of new experiments, experiences and knowledge gained. To be scientific is to keep an open mind on things, to be willing to change, to be ready to jettison the old in the light of new

evidence, and to go by actual practical results.

“Poor countries are poor because those who have power make choices that create poverty. Such countries develop ‘extractive’ institutions that ‘keep poor countries poor’.”

—Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson,
‘Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity and Poverty’
Nehru was the founder of the “extractive institutions” .

There is not a single example of a country which prospered or whose poor were better off under communism or socialism. The democratic countries like the UK which were going downhill with their socialistic policies did course correction under Thatcher and prospered. Extrapolating the time it took Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan to become first-world countries by adopting competitive capitalism, and the time it took West Germany and Japan to rise from the ashes of the Second World War by adopting capitalist economy, it seems reasonable that India would have been a prosperous, first-rate, first-world country by 1980 had it too adopted competitive capitalism and befriended the West.

*“A young man who isn't a socialist hasn't got a heart;
an old man who is a socialist hasn't got a head.”*

—David Lloyd George

Unfortunately for the crores of starving Indians and millions of others who had great hopes for themselves, their families and the nation after independence, Nehru guided India into a poverty-and-misery-perpetuating socialistic-bureaucratic black-hole.

His descendants, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi, by doing much more of the same, made the situation worse. UPA-I and II, by part reverting to the Nehru-Indira disastrous ways, reversed the Narsimha Rao–Vajpayee upward trend.

“He [Nehru] had no idea of economics. He talked of Socialism, but he did not know how to define it. He talked of social justice, but I told him he could have this only when there was an increase in production. He did not grasp that. So you need a leader who understands economic issues and will invigorate your economy.”

— Chester Bowles

Sardar Patel, Rajagopalachari and Rajendra Prasad were opposed to socialism.

If only they had led India after Independence, rather than Nehru, India would have been a prosperous first-world country long ago, and it would hopefully have been saved from the debilitating feudal dynacracry (dynastic democracy) founded by Nehru, that is at the root of all miseries.

“Mr Jawaharlal Nehru returned from Cambridge with notions of how an all-governing interventionist state can force people into happiness and prosperity through socialism... He sticks to this bias in spite of the demonstration of world experience against it... I hate the present folly and arrogance as much as I hated the foreign arrogance of those [British] days.”

— C Rajagopalachari (Rajaji)

Nehru just went by what was popular and fashionable among the upper classes in Britain, without any deep study of economics (despite many years in jail where he had all the time in the world, and access to books), or even a reasonable or understanding of its basics, although economics is a most vital subject for any political leader.

Blunder–59:
Pathetic India vs. Other Countries

India, which was far better placed with respect to many countries in Southeast Asia when Nehru took over the charge of India, was left far, far behind all of them by the end of the Nehru's tenure. Nehru miserably failed to do justice to India's potential.

Let's take a concrete comparative example. After its separation from Malaysia in 1965, Singapore was left as an independent country that was not only poor and backward and with meagre defensive capabilities, it had NO natural resources—not even water! It had to import water from Malaysia. Lee Kuan Yew, often referred to by his initials as LKY, who became its Prime Minister, lead it through its traumatic separation. Thanks to his enlightened grasp on “what makes a nation strong and prosperous”, sound and far-sighted diplomacy and foreign policy, innovative ideas, wise strategy and unmatched competence in governance, he lifted Singapore from a poor, backward, “Third World” nation in 1965 to a "First World" Asian Tiger by 1980—in mere 15 years!

In comparison, what did India achieve during the 17 years of Nehru rule? India had tremendous natural and water resources and the significant colonial legacy of defence, military, trained bureaucracy, industries and infrastructure, particularly railways. However, at the end of Nehru's 17-year rule India remained a poor, third-world country of starving millions begging the world for food and aid.

LKY managed to convert barren Singapore, with no water resources, into a clean, beautiful, green, garden nation. And, what has India done after independence? Converted India into a gigantic garbage bin!

Blunder-60 :
Nehruvian (and NOT 'Hindu') Rate of Growth

While the developing countries of SE-Asia, which had been far behind India in 1947, raced ahead at over 9% growth and became highly prosperous, with infra-structure rivalling western countries, India plodded along at what was derisively referred to as the *Hindu rate of growth* of just 3%, and became a basket-case, begging aid and food from all.

However, the term "Hindu rate of growth" is highly inappropriate and unfair, besides being derogatory. Let us examine why?

One, the "Nehruvian rate of growth". The low rate of growth was thanks to Nehru-Indira-Rajiv's policies. If rather than the "Hindu rate of growth" it was called the "Nehruvian rate of growth" or "Nehruvian socialistic rate of growth" or "NIDP [Nehru-Indira-Dynasty policies] rate of growth", one would have no quarrel.

Two, the "Colonial rate of growth". The rate of growth during the pre-independence period, the colonial period, was even less! In fact, it had even turned negative during several long periods!! Why was the rate of growth then not called the "Colonial rate of growth" or the "Christian rate of growth" in a pejorative sense?

As per an estimate by Angus Maddison, a Cambridge University historian, "India's share of the world income fell from 22.6% in 1700, comparable to Europe's share of 23.3%, to a low of 3.8% in 1952."

Hindu-India had been highly prosperous in the past, thanks to its *massive* "Hindu rate of growth", which is why first the countries to the northwest of India, and then the Western countries invaded it. Until the rise of the West, India was possibly the richest country in the world, which is why it presented an irresistible target for the ravaging Mongols and their descendents, and then the West. Why then was the term "Hindu rate of growth" not used in an adulatory sense?

Three, how do you explain the recent growth rate of over 9%? The same India, after only part junking of the Nehru-Indira-Rajiv socialistic policies, reached a growth rate of over 9%! Junk more of the Nehru-Indira socialistic policies, and the growth rate will rise to double-digits.

Four, absurdity of religious-cultural connotation. Many Islamic countries prior to the world demand and discovery of oil were very poor. Was their growth rate called the "Islamic rate of growth"? The growth rate during the dark ages of

Europe was static or negative, when during the same period India was immensely rich and progressive. Was it ever called the “*Christian rate of growth*”? Sri Lanka and Myanmar have had long periods of no growth or measly growth. Were they castigated for being under the spell of the “*Buddhist rate of growth*”? China’s growth rate after going communist and till the end of the Mao-period was pathetic. Was it termed the “*Atheistic rate of growth*”? Why associate “Hindu” with a rate of economic growth unless there is an ulterior motive of deliberately showing Hinduism in bad light? Of course, many use the term unfeelingly, without being conscious of its implications.

Five, Nehru vs. Hinduism. Nehru was an agnostic, and was more English than Indian, more western than eastern, more “something else” than a Hindu, and therefore it is grossly inappropriate to name a rate of growth, which was thanks to him and his dynasty, as “Hindu”.

Six, why not “Secular” rate of growth? Nehru, Nehru-dynasty and company have raved ad nauseum on “secularism”, without ensuring it in practice. Why not credit the growth rate thanks to them as the “‘Secular’ rate of growth”?

Seven, Socialism vs. Hinduism. Hindu-India has had long tradition of free international trade and commerce, and of liberal religious and world view. Such an ethos can never accept the Big Brother denouement or the run-up to it. There is an age old Indian proverb: *Raja Vyapari taya Praja Bhikhari*. That is, people become beggars when government enters into business. A belief in self-reliance and an overweening socialistic state on the part of Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi actually did India in, rather than something that had anything to do with Hinduism.

Eight, Socialism vs. Mahatma Gandhi and Others. Mahatma Gandhi was no socialist. Nor were the other stalwarts like Sardar Patel, Rajaji and Rajendra Prasad. All the four—Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Rajaji and Rajendra Prasad—quite unlike Nehru, could be considered as also representing the Hindu ethos, and perhaps precisely for that reason they were against socialistic claptrap of Nehru.

Nine, a camouflage. In any case, using “Hindu” as in “Hindu rate of growth” in a pejorative sense is not only insulting, it camouflages the real reasons—socialistic claptrap was never going to give you a respectable growth rate to enable you to ameliorate the lot of the poor.

But, the question arises as to why did the term “Hindu rate of growth” gain currency? Well, here are the reasons.

One. Raj Krishna. The term was reportedly coined by the economist Raj Krishna to draw attention to the embarrassing rate of growth during the Nehru-Indira period.

Two. Blame Hinduism rather than Socialism. Indian politicians and bureaucrats never wanted to admit that the fault lay with the socialistic apparatus. Why blame self? Especially, why blame something on which you have fattened yourselves?

Three. The Secularists. For certain class of intellectuals the touchstone of secularism is whether you can be abusive to Hinduism. The term “Hindu” in “Hindu rate of growth” serves that purpose.

Four. The Colonialists and the India-baiters. Said the colonial-minded: “Give power to the Hindus, and what you will get is the “Hindu rate of growth”! Had the British Raj continued, things would have been better!!”

Misgovernance

Blunder-61 :

Debilitating Babudom & Criminal-Justice System

During the Nehru era, callous, heartless and indifferent Police and Criminal-Justice System took roots; and ineffective, incompetent, self-seeking and shamelessly corrupt bureaucracy entrenched itself. Steep descent of India into a corrupt society resulted in its inability to provide justice, dignity and prosperity to the poor, and it limited economic growth.

Babudom—the IAS-IPS-IFS-IRS combine, those from the criminal-justice system, and the bureaucracy lower down—is very intimately related to socialism, poor rate of growth, continued poverty, injustice and misery. Nehru did nothing to change the babudom and make it people-oriented, service-oriented and development-oriented, they continued with their feudal class consciousness and arrogant ways, ill-suited to public service.

The pre-independence babu culture of living like a rajah, misusing power, exploiting people, becoming rich at their cost, and aping the British ways to look cultured, continued, and indeed became worse with Raj giving way to Nehru-Indira's licence-permit-quota raj.

The Nehruvian era laid the foundations of Indian babudom that is authoritarian, arrogant, callous, unfair, heartless, ill-mannered, indifferent, incompetent, inefficient, ineffective, nepotistic, sloppy, sluggish, self-seeking and shamelessly corrupt. Bureaucracy is now Kleptocracy.

The term Indian “Administrative” “Service” is a misnomer considering the criminal absence of both “administration” and “service”. We now have babudom that indeed have very low IQ—low *Integrity Quotient*.

Blunder-62 : **Corruption in the “Good” Old Days**

Nehru was himself personally honest money-wise. He did keep his hands clean in money matters; although he did not mind others dirtying their hands to raise funds for the Congress Party and for other purposes—what mattered was power for himself.

From the very beginning of his Prime Ministership Nehru adopted a queer and casual approach towards corruption. A resolution was passed by majority in the 1948-session of the Congress Party on the “standards of public conduct” of members, and for maintenance of high standards of conduct by the members of the state and central legislatures. Rather than appreciating and lauding the spirit of the resolution, Nehru took offense at it—as if it was meant to censure his government. He went to the inexplicable extent of threatening to tender his resignation if the resolution was not rescinded—the Party complied with his odd demand! Wonder why the Party did not stand up for its principles, and accept his resignation? It would have been a blessing in disguise!

There were many cases where Nehru condoned corruption. Or, defended those accused of it. This tended to make corruption acceptable. In a way, the foundation of corruption were laid during Nehru’s time, although, unlike Manmohan Singh, Nehru had almost unlimited powers to carry through whatever he wanted.

It was a surprise that Krishna Menon[KM] was being continued as High Commissioner[HC] in London, when he deserved to be kicked out. KM had engaged in a number of shady deals for the GoI and the Defence, while in London as HC: *Jeep Scandal* was only one of the scandals. Nehru was informed through various channels of the financial irregularities being committed by KM, but the PM, as usual, adopted a policy of drift. Nehru subsequently made KM a Cabinet Minister despite opposition from many.

To name a few more cases, out of the many, apart from the Jeep scandal of 1948, there was Mudgal case of 1951, Mundra deals of 1957-58, Malaviya Sirajuddin scandal of 1963, Pratap Singh Kairon case of 1963. Unfortunately, as the years progressed, things became worse. Rajaji was against Nehru's License-Permit-Quota-Raj not only because it grievously hurt the economy, but also because it was a huge source of corruption. But, it went unchecked.

In the case of the Jeep Scandal, the Nehru Government had been brazen enough to announce in the Parliament that the matter be treated as closed—

something unthinkable in this age of alert media and 24x7 TV News. Even in the case of Chagla Committee's probe against TT Krishnamachari, Nehru tried to defend his minister, rather than appreciating the good job done by Chagla. When severe allegations were levelled against Kairon by the critics within the Congress itself, Nehru pooh-poohed them and resisted any enquiry—Kairon had to ultimately resign following Das Commission's findings.

This is from The Hindu of 9 January 2010, which reproduces what it had said over 50 years ago in its issue of 9 January 1960: "Prime Minister Nehru categorically ruled out any proposal for appointing a high power tribunal to enquire into and investigate charges of corruption against Ministers or persons in high authority, for the main reason that, in India, or for that matter any other country where there was a democratic set-up, he could not see how such a tribunal could function. The appointment of such a tribunal, Mr. Nehru felt, would produce an atmosphere of mutual recrimination, suspicion, condemnation, charges and counter-charges and pulling each other down, in a way that it would become impossible for normal administration to function. More than half the time of the Press conference was devoted by Mr. Nehru to deal with this question of appointing a tribunal to enquire into cases of corruption as recently urged by India's former Finance Minister, Mr C.D.Deshmukh."

That indeed must be a very innovative restriction of democracy! It's like saying a Lokpal would subvert democracy and adversely affect administrative functioning. And Nehru suggests no alternative to curb corruption!

Nehru had commented thus on the charges against Pratap Singh Kairon: "The question thus arises as to whether the chief minister is compelled to resign because of adverse findings on some questions of fact by Supreme Court. The ministers are collectively responsible to the legislature. Therefore, the matter was one which concerned the assembly. As a rule therefore, the question of removing a minister would not arise unless the legislature expressed its wish by a majority vote."

So, even if a minister is corrupt he can't be removed, unless voted out! So you can buy immunity by manipulating or managing votes.

Dr Rajendra Prasad wrote to Nehru: "I must say that I am somewhat disappointed. The question of corruption has been too prominently and too long before the public to brook any further delay in making a probe into it. I think Deshmukh has given enough details about cases to be traced and once the Government makes up its mind and gives immunity to informants against

vindictive action, proofs will be forthcoming. I would therefore suggest that thought be given to finding out cases. It is not enough that you are satisfied that all is well. A popular Government's duty is to give satisfaction to the people also... I have been worried by your suggestion that I should send for you and speak to you if I have anything to communicate rather than write. I am afraid this will stultify me in performing my constitutional duty..."

What does this mean? Nehru neither wanted to set up an Ombudsman on corruption nor a tribunal nor did he want the President to put anything in writing on corruption-related matters. He wanted the President to be satisfied with his verbal assurance that all was well! Asking for anything more was an unfriendly act against him! Was Nehru running some personal, private-limited government?

Blunder-63 :
Messy Reorganisation of States

In India, distinct geographical areas have their own distinct language; and associated with them a distinct set of culture, customs, dresses, music, dance, arts, literature and so on. Indian freedom fighters, except perhaps the anglicised-set that included Nehru, were deeply aware of the love and attachment of the people to their mother-tongues and the associated culture, and its power in harnessing them to the cause of freedom; because political freedom would also have meant freedom from English and colonial culture, and its replacement by their mother-tongue and their culture.

It was therefore natural for the leaders of the Indian Independence movements to have worked out back in the beginning of the twentieth century itself that upon independence India should be reorganised along the lines of the major languages so that the people of the concerned regions could fulfil their aspirations, and their language and culture flourish. The Congress Party had committed itself to this way back in 1917.

In the constitution that was framed by the Congress under the inspiration and guidance of Mahatma Gandhi, India was divided into provinces along linguistic lines, and the Provincial Congress Committees (PCCs) were as per the linguistic zones, like Orissa PCC, Karnataka PCC, and so on. All the leaders of the independence movement from different regions and language areas were agreeable on this—there were no two opinions.

No one thought it would be divisive in nature and a threat to the national unity. That there were distinct languages and cultures was a fact on the ground; and if that meant divisive tendencies, then that would have been there whether or not separate states were carved on that basis.

On the contrary, by not carving out the states as per the major-language regions there was a good possibility of dissatisfaction, frustration, anger and mischief leading to bad blood among people and divisive tendencies.

Those who were close to the ground and genuinely understood India knew that what held India together through thousands of years and through trying times was the overarching culture of broad Hinduism and associated religions that evolved in the Indian soil like Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. This unique Indian combination cut across languages and local cultures and stitched together the larger entity, Bharat Varsh.

However, in the wake of partition, the division of India on the Hindu-Muslim

religious lines was extrapolated to include possible future divisions on linguistic lines, and a needless fear psychosis developed.

What was decided coolly and rationally in the pre-independence times and was taken for granted, and what most people implicitly looked forward to as a logical post-independence step was sought to be given a go by, as a panic, irrational reaction to the partition.

Rather than forming a competent body to go into all aspects of reorganisation of India and making recommendations, Nehru's government sought to postpone the whole issue indefinitely.

Doing nothing is always more convenient than doing something worthwhile. One can always come up with some reasoning to maintain the status quo. Nehru's government did not realise the consequences of trying to sweep the whole issue under the carpet.

The issue erupted. First, for Andhra. The government tried their best to suppress the agitation. The more they tried the worse it became. Ultimately, they had to give in, and the state of Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1953.

All the violence, destruction to property, and bad blood among people speaking different languages could have been avoided had the issue been rationally and peacefully settled through a body that could have been set up. Ultimately, States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) was formed in 1954. It submitted its report on 30 September 1955 recommending reorganisation of India's states. The Parliament debated the Report, and passed the States Reorganisation Act on 31 August 1956, as per which the reorganisation was effected on 1 November 1956.

However, the matter of Maharashtra, Gujarat and Mumbai was again allowed to hang for too long, leading to agitations and violence. Eventually, Nehru had to give in. The states of Maharashtra and Gujarat were created on 1 May 1960.

It showed that the Nehru's government lacked the wisdom to do the right thing at the right time, and created avoidable problems for itself and for the country. Only when forced did they do what people demanded and aspired for. If you indeed had some great and valid principles behind what you did, you should have stuck to your stand, even if you became unpopular. (But, for Nehru, popularity and power was the priority.)

What was the down side, if any? Nothing.

The linguistic states never asked for secession. Indian unity actually became stronger. The language and culture of different linguistic states flourished—

compared to what the status was earlier.

The problem with Nehru was that most of his major stands—whether on Kashmir, or on Hyderabad, or on India-China border issues, or on economy, or on the Northeast, or on States' reorganisation—displayed lack of grasp and clarity.

Nehru was not rooted in India; nor was he a rational, scientific thinker, with wisdom and guts to take right decision at the right time. Fortunately, he retracted on States' reorganisation, else there would have been further problems.

Educational & Cultural Mismanagement

Blunder-64 : **Neglect of Education**

Neglect of education, especially at the primary and the secondary level during the Nehruvian era sealed India's fate as a prosperous emerging nation and a genuine, enlightened democracy. Among the first things that the countries like Japan, South Korea and Singapore did to become prosperous was to focus on education—both mass education and higher education. Nehru knew only one formula for development: socialism and public sector—which took India to dogs.

Considering how backward the home constituencies of the Nehru-Gandhis have been, despite the fact that they have been representing them for decades, it would appear they have had a vested interest in keeping people illiterate and backward—such people can be easily fooled into voting for you through emotional trickery and sops.

The education under Nehru became elitist. There was regrettable compartmentalisation into the HMTs (Hindi-Medium types) and the EMTs (English-Medium types), with EMTs cornering most facilities and opportunities. There were little efforts to make education universal and of high quality. Policy restrictions and the bureaucratic-maze spread by the Nehruvians ensured peripheral role for the private sector in education, thus severely limiting the already limited educational sector further.

Nehruvians flaunt establishment of IITs and IIMs during the time of Nehru. The question is whether just five IITs and a few IIMs were enough for a country of India's size. Shouldn't there have been several IITs and several IIMs in each state?

Universal literacy and an informed public were the two factors Nehru-Dynasty could not have survived; so it seems they let wide-spread illiteracy prevail.

Blunder-65 : **Messing Up the Language Issue**

Gandhi had advocated Hindi or Hindustani as the national language and the link language. All the top leaders, whether from South or North, East or West, were agreeable on it. Yet, the matter was allowed to become controversial under the watch of Nehru after independence.

After considerable deliberations the Constituent Assembly agreed that the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in the Devanagari script; but for 15 years from the commencement of the Constitution, that is, from 26 January 1950, the English language shall continue to be used for all the official purposes of the Union—that is, till 25 January 1965.

The Official Languages Act of 1963 stipulated that English “may” be used along with Hindi in official communications after 1965. That left it ambiguous. Was it optional?

Lal Bahadur Shastri as prime minister stood by the decision to make Hindi official with effect from 26 January 1965, and all hell broke loose in the South. Ultimately, Shastri had to back out.

The question is not Hindi or English, the question is why the matter was allowed to drift for 15 years under Nehru? If indeed all were not agreeable on Hindi, then it should have been announced well in advance that the status quo would continue till as long as all were not agreed.

Nehru’s drift and lack of clarity eventually led to massive agitations and violence and bad blood among people, which were quite avoidable. Shastri too should have been careful not to go along with a decision that was not acceptable to a large section.

If it was thought that English is a useful global language, then, as a matter of policy, it should have been made compulsory for all from the primary school itself. Government should have pumped in money to ensure there were facilities available in all schools to teach English, apart from the regional language and Hindi.

Doing so would have ensured a level-playing field for all students. With all children knowing English, the “English Language Aristocracy” would have been dead. This is not to say that the medium of instruction should have been English. It should have been in the mother tongue in the schools, and optionally also in English or Hindi—with no privileges attached to learning in English or Hindi. But, it should have been compulsory for all to learn English—and good English.

That way, English would have been just a foreign language everyone knew. If English became a factor in getting jobs, like in IT or BPO or KPO, then with all students knowing it, it would not have given an edge to the less deserving.

In sharp contrast to India, it is admirable what Israel did. Upon formation of Israel in 1948, many Jews scattered all over the world came over. They spoke different languages. To ensure a unifying language, many linguists, backed by the State, set about reviving Hebrew, Israel's ancient language, which had fallen in decrepitude. Now, all Israelis speak Hebrew. It has given them an identity, and has greatly helped unify Israel. Most also know English, as it is taught from the primary school itself.

A miniscule English-speaking elite, a miniscule set of Hindi diehards and a non-visionary, incompetent leadership messed up the language issue.

A vast majority of people in the South knew neither Hindi nor English, so where was the question of their preferring either?

Why should Hindi diehards have tried to impose Hindi? It is a democratic nation, and a consensus should have been evolved; and till that was ensured, nothing should have been done to force any language.

Further, why shouldn't an ancient nation like India have its own national language known to all for easy communication, without in anyway ignoring the regional languages or English or affecting the job-prospects?

Who cares what language is so chosen? What is important is that there should have been at least one common language. It could have been Hindi or Hindustani, with liberal borrowing of words from other regional languages and English; or it could have been simplified Sanskrit or Tamil or Bengali or any other or a new hybrid language, with borrowings from all!

Language Commission setup in 1955 examined the progress in Hindi to replace English as the union language by 26 January 1965 as provided in the constitution, reiterated the constitutional obligation, made various recommendations, but left the decision to the government.

A Parliamentary Committee, with GB Pant (the then Home Minister) as the Chairman, was appointed in 1957 to scrutinize the commission's recommendations. Its unanimous (but for one dissent) recommendation was that Hindi should be the principal language from 26 January 1965, and English a subsidiary one, with no target date for the switch over. Pant sent the draft-report of the Parliamentary Committee to Nehru.

Here are the extracts from Kuldeep Nayar's 'Beyond the Lines' on what

transpired: “The use of the word ‘subsidiary’ for English infuriated Nehru, who argued that the word, subsidiary, meant English was the language of ‘vassals’. [Various substitute words were suggested by Pant]... Nehru disagreed with Pant and worse, he was quite indignant and reportedly made some harsh comments. Finally, the word subsidiary was substituted by 'additional'. Pant told me, ‘Mark my words, Hindi will not come to the country’. He was dejected. That very evening, Pant had his first heart attack...”

Blunder–66:
Promoting Urdu & Persian-Arabic Script

Hindi is written in the Devanagari script from left to right, while Urdu is written from right to left, being derived from a Persian modification of the Arabic script. High variants of Hindi depend on Sanskrit for enrichment, while Urdu looks to Persian and Arabic for its higher variants.

Rather than giving Hindi its due, Nehru insisted that Urdu was the language of the people of Delhi, and should accordingly be given official recognition. When the Home Minister Pant told him that the statistics showed only 6% of the Delhiwalas had claimed Urdu as their language, Nehru tried to rubbish the statistics, though he didn't press further with his crazy idea.

Nehru was also in favour of Persian-Arabic script in which Urdu is written, rather than Devanagari script in which Hindi and Sanskrit are written. It seems that anything Indian or Hindu or representing Hindu/Indian heritage, and Nehru had some problem with it, and he tried to abort it. Ram Manohar Lohia had rightly said that Nehru was against anything that would give Indians a sense of Indianness!

Also, Nehru promoted what he was personally comfortable with: English and Urdu. Not what was good for the nation.

Hindi clearly had association with nation, India, Hindu, and Sanskrit; while Urdu has been advocated by Muslim leaders. The states that became West Pakistan and East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) had no association whatever with Urdu; their languages were Punjabi, Sindhi, Bengali, etc. But, the Muslim leaders from UP who migrated to Pakistan imposed Urdu on Pakistan. What business Nehru had in trying to favour Urdu and Persian-Arabic script can only be understood if we account for his pseudo-secular character, and eagerness to appease Muslims for votes.

Blunder-67 : **Neglect of Sanskrit**

With the ascendancy of English Language Aristocracy and the Brown Sahibs (Nehru being its most prominent representative), work in Indian languages and Sanskrit suffered a setback.

Look at the condition of Sanskrit—unarguably the greatest and the most scientific language. It is becoming extinct. And unless you have mastery in Sanskrit and other older languages you can't do effective research in past Indian history.

Reportedly, those who have genuine interest in working on the Indian past now go to certain reputed universities in the US, who not only have a rich collection of relevant books, but also have faculty proficient in Sanskrit! So, to research India, go abroad!!

India was the motherland of our race, and Sanskrit the mother of Europe's languages: she was the mother of our philosophy; mother, through the Arabs, of much of our mathematics; mother, through the Buddha, of the ideals embodied in Christianity; mother, through the village community, of self-government and democracy. Mother India is in many ways the mother of us all.

—Will Durant, American historian and philosopher

The adverse fallout of the above is that distortionists of the Hindu cultural and religious heritage like Wendy Doniger of the University of Chicago, and Sheldon Pollock of the Columbia University have become respected global authorities on Sanskrit, Sanskrit literature and ancient Indian heritage.

What is more, some rich Indian businessmen have financed them liberally to bring out series based on Indian classics, rather than financing competent Indians. Their interpretations are biased and distorted.

It is only lately that people like Rajiv Malhotra and other Indians have begun exposing them. Books by Rajiv Malhotra like '*Breaking India*', '*Being Different*', '*The Battle for Sanskrit*' are worth reading (please check Amazon).

Sanskrit, the most scientific language, and the mother of many Indian and European languages, could have been simplified and modernized (like Israel did with Hebrew), and taught in all schools, in addition to English. It would have revitalized India, and helped unify it.

The comments of Gurcharan Das are worth noting: "...an Indian who seriously

wants to study the classics of Sanskrit or ancient regional languages will have to go abroad. 'If Indian education and scholarship continue along their current trajectory,' writes Sheldon Pollock, the brilliant professor of Sanskrit at Columbia University, 'the number of citizens capable of reading and understanding the texts and documents of the classical era will very soon approach a statistical zero. India is about to become the only major world culture whose literary patrimony, and indeed history, are in the hands of scholars outside the country.' This is extraordinary in a country with dozens of Sanskrit departments in all major Indian universities...The ugly truth is that the quality of teaching in these institutions is so poor that not a single graduate is able to think seriously about the past and critically examine ancient texts... Where is India's soft power when there are fewer and fewer Indians capable of interrogating the texts of Kalidasa or the edicts of Ashoka?...To be worthy of being Indian does not mean to stop speaking in English. It means to be able to have an organic connection with our many rich linguistic pasts...What separates man from beast is memory and if we lose historical memory then we surrender it to those who will abuse it."

Actually, Nehru wanted to carry on with the language he was comfortable in, and it is doubtful if he really cared for things Indian or Indian languages or culture.

Blunder-68 : **Being Creative with History**

There has been little genuine work in Indian history after independence. No worthwhile books on Indian history come from the Indian academe. Those that have been authored by the “eminent” Indian court historians during the Nehru-Indira Dynasty era are generally insipid, superficial, distorted, wanting in serious research and insight, and driven by Leftist-Marxist ideological bias. There have been gross distortions. There are parts in Nehru's own books like the "Glimpses of World History" and the "Discovery of India" that contain distorted history (please read next “blunder”).

People like Nehru had strangely erroneous notions on how history should or should not be written. If writing of what actually happened in the past—even if it was a millennium or more back—could adversely affect (in their wrong opinion) the present, then give it a spin—that was their view. So, be creative with history—bury or bend or ignore facts, if so warranted.

First, it is a false notion to presume such adverse effects.

Second, if different writers presume or interpret differently, should each write a distorted history in his or her own way?

Third, what really happened would anyway be known through other sources, so why play with facts. When original sources and the writings by the contemporaries are available—those who actually witnessed what happened and wrote about them, like Alberuni and others—why would those who care for history be mislead by the creative writers of history?

Fourth, it is an insult to the intelligence of the general public and readers to be presumed to be gullible enough to swallow wholesale what these creative writers dish out.

Fifth, it is thoroughly unprofessional to take such liberties with writing of history.

It is unwise to try and mould history to suit one's ideological bend or bias, or for political or religious or social or cultural purposes. Truth should not be fiddled with.

People should not be taken for granted or taken for fools that they would believe the junk written—like Nehru thought, or Nehruvian-leftist-Marxist historians or the rightists or the fundamentalists think.

There has to be professionalism in writing of history. If history is painful or

unpalatable, so be it. It is better to know the truth, whether it is good or bad, palatable or obnoxious. People must learn to face the truth, and learn from history.

In fact, the sense of what is good and what is bad also changes from time to time: should history then keep getting re-written?’

It is a misunderstanding of what the history-writing is all about, and silly, immature socialistic-leftist-‘holier&wiser-than-thou’-Nehruvian notions of “what is good for the people”, and an arrogance that “I know better what people should know” that leads to writing of creative history.

What happened centuries ago is no reflection on people now. Notions have changed. You insult people by twisting the facts. Should the plunder that Qasim, Ghazni, Ghoris and other Islamic hordes carried out be swept under the carpet lest it should hurt the Muslims.

If Hindu kings did something atrocious in the past, does it mean it should be suppressed, lest it should hurt the Hindus. Christians engaged in terrible atrocities during their campaigns of conversion, inquisitions and colonisation. Do they now sweep it under the carpet? No. There have been mountains of books from the West detailing the atrocities committed. Germans teach their children on Nazi atrocities. Truth must be known. Then only can one come to terms with the reality and ensure the mistakes are not repeated in the future.

Blunder-69 : **Distortion of History by Nehru**

Wrote Perry Anderson, a British historian and political essayist, and Professor of History and Sociology at UCLA: “Nehru had enjoyed the higher education Gandhi didn’t have, and an intellectual development not arrested by intense religious belief. But these advantages yielded less than might be thought. He seems to have learned very little at Cambridge, scraping a mediocre degree in natural sciences that left no trace thereafter, did poorly in his bar exams, and was not much of a success when he returned to practise law in his father’s footsteps. The contrast with Subhas Chandra Bose, a brilliant student of philosophy at Cambridge, who was the first native to pass the exams into the elite ranks of the Indian civil service and then decline entry to it on patriotic grounds, is striking.

“But an indifferent beginning is no obstacle to subsequent flowering, and in due course Nehru became a competent orator and prolific writer. What he never acquired, however, was a modicum of literary taste or mental discipline. His most ambitious work, *The Discovery of India*, which appeared in 1946, is a steam bath of Schwärmerei [sentimental enthusiasm].

“It would be unfair to compare Nehru to Ambedkar, the leader of the Untouchables, intellectually head and shoulders above most of the Congress leaders, owing in part to far more serious training at the LSE and Columbia. To read Ambedkar is to enter a different world. “The Discovery of India”... illustrates not just Nehru’s lack of formal scholarship and addiction to romantic myth, but something deeper, not so much an intellectual as a psychological limitation: a capacity for self-deception with far-reaching political consequences.”

For a glimpse of the distortion of Indian history by Nehru let us take an example.

Somnath Temple is the most sacred of the twelve *Aadi Jyotirlings*. The temple was destroyed and looted six times: by Junayad, the Arab governor of Sind, in 725 CE; by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1024 CE; by Sultan Allauddin Khilji in 1296 CE; by Muzaffar Shah I, the Sultan of Gujarat, in 1375 CE; by Mahmud Begda, the Sultan of Gujarat in 1451 CE; and by Aurangzeb in 1701 CE. But, each time it was rebuilt.

Mahmud of Ghazni destroyed the temple in 1024 CE in his 16th of the 17 raids into India over a period of about 30 years, and carried away camel-loads of jewels and gold. It is said that Mahmud personally hammered the temple’s

gilded idol to pieces and carted it to Ghazni where they were incorporated into the foot-steps of the city's new Jamiah Masjid. Thousands of defenders were massacred, including one Ghogha Rana, who had challenged Mahmud at the ripe old age of 90.

Wrote Zakariya al-Qazwini, a 13th-century Arab geographer:

“Somnath: celebrated city of India, situated on the shore of the sea, and washed by its waves. Among the wonders of that place was the temple in which was placed the idol called Somnath. This idol was in the middle of the temple without anything to support it from below, or to suspend it from above [might have been so, thanks to magnets]. It was held in the highest honour among the Hindus, and whoever beheld it floating in the air was struck with amazement, whether he was a Musulman or an infidel. The Hindus used to go on pilgrimage to it whenever there was an eclipse of the moon, and would then assemble there to the number of more than a hundred thousand...

“When the Sultan Yaminu-d Daula Mahmud Bin Subuktigin [Mahmud of Ghazni, who was son of Subuktigin] went to wage religious war against India, he made great efforts to capture and destroy Somnath, in the hope that the Hindus would then become Muhammadans. As a result thousands of Hindus were converted to Islam. He arrived there in the middle of Zi-l k'ada, 416 A.H. [December, 1025 CE]... The king looked upon the idol with wonder, and gave orders for the seizing of the spoil, and the appropriation of the treasures. There were many idols of gold and silver and vessels set with jewels...”

In his book *‘The Discovery of India’*, Nehru writes about ‘Mahmud of Ghazni and the Afghans’ in ‘Chapter-6: New Problems’. A sentence in it goes, “He met with...on his way back from Somnath in Kathiawar.” That’s all. There is nothing more on Somnath!

But, what Nehru totally omits in ‘The Discovery of India’, he does mention a little bit in his other book which he wrote ten years earlier in 1935—*‘Glimpses of World History’*. In ‘Chapter-51: From Harsha to Mahmud in North India’, Nehru writes, “But it was in Somnath that he [Mahmud of Ghazni] got the most treasure...” He further writes, “He is looked upon as a great leader of Islam who came to spread Islam in India. Most Muslims adore him; most Hindus hate him. As a matter of fact, he [Mahmud] was hardly a religious man. He was a Mohammedan, of course, but that was by the way. Above everything he was soldier, and a brilliant soldier. He came to India to conquer and loot, as soldiers unfortunately do, and he would have done so to whatever religion he might have

belonged... We must therefore not fall into the common error of considering Mahmud as anything more than a successful soldier.”

Nehru is labouring to convince the reader that the havoc that Mahmud wrought was not because he was a Muslim, and that a person of another religion would have also done the same. Further, Nehru does not dwell on what all destruction Mahmud wrecked.

Real history is what historians of that time— contemporaries of Mahmud— themselves wrote. As per the contemporary history, when Mahmud of Ghazni was carrying away the Shiva idol of gold from the Somnath temple, many rich traders came together and offered him even more wealth if he returned the idol. Mahmud’s retort was: “*I am an idol-breaker, not an idol-seller!*”

Nehru further writes: “Mahmud [of Ghazni] was far more a warrior than a man of faith...” Then about Mathura, Nehru writes, “Mahmud was anxious to make his own city of Ghazni rival the great cities of central and western Asia and he carried off from India large number of artisans and master builders. Building interested him and he was much impressed by the city of Mathura near Delhi. About this Mahmud wrote: ‘There are here a thousand edifices as firm as the faith of the faithful; nor is it likely that this city has attained its present condition but at the expense of many millions of dinars, nor could such another be constructed under a period of 200 years.’”

What is interesting and intriguing is that nowhere there is any mention by Nehru of how this Mahmud, the lover of buildings as he calls him, mercilessly destroyed Mathura and Somnath!

Wrote Al Utbi, an aide and secretary of Mahmud of Ghazni, in *Tarikh-e Yamini*: “The Sultan gave orders that all the temples should be burnt with naphtha and fire and levelled with the ground.” Utbi wrote that Mahmud first wanted to go to Sijistan, but subsequently changed his mind for “a holy war against Hind”, and details how Sultan “purified Hind from idolatry and raised mosques”. He also states that the “Musulmans paid no regard to the booty till they had satiated themselves with the slaughter of the infidels and worshippers of the sun and fire.”

In *Tabakat-I Nasiri*, Minhaju-s Siraj hails Mahmud for “converting as many as a thousand idol-temples into mosques”, and calls him “one of the greatest champions of Islam”.

It is not for nothing that Pakistanis name their missiles Ghazni and Ghori.

Nehru further wrote: “Of the Indians, Alberuni [who came with Mahmud of

Ghazni] says that they ‘are haughty, foolishly vain, self-contained, and stolid,’... Probably a correct enough description of the temper of the people.” Nehru seems comfortable and fine with anything negative about Indians, but has little negative to comment on the massive destruction wrought, and its wrecker, Mahmud of Ghazni!

Nehru further quotes Alberuni writing about the havoc caused by Mahmud, “The Hindus became like the atoms of dust scattered in all directions and like a tale of old in the mouths of people. Their scattered remains cherish of course the most inveterate aversion towards all Muslims.” Nehru then comments, “This poetic description gives us an idea...” So, Nehru found Alberuni’s description of terrible misfortune wrought on India and Hindus poetic!!

Incidentally, Alberuni had travelled to India with Mahmud of Ghazni during the first half of the eleventh century CE. The book “*Alberuni’s India*” is Alberuni’s written work on India, translated by Dr Edward C Sachau.

Here is an extract from what Alberuni, who was a witness to what Mahmud did in India and to India, and who is referred to by Nehru in the quote of Nehru above, had to say: “This prince [Sabuktagin] chose the holy war as his calling, and therefore called himself Al-ghazi (i.e. warring on the road of Allah)... afterwards his son Yamin-addaula Mahmud marched into India during a period of thirty years or more. God be merciful to both father and son! Mahmud [of Ghazni] utterly ruined the prosperity of the country [India], and performed there wonderful exploits, by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions, and like a tale of old in the mouth of the people...”

Interesting thing is what Nehru chooses to quote from Alberuni, and what he chooses to ignore.

Blunder-70 :
Rise of the Parasitic Leftist-‘Liberal’ Class

In India, you just have to get familiar with the “leftist, anti-American, pro-Arab, anti-Israel, ‘secularist’, Hindu-baiting, Muslim-apologist, Nehruvian, JNU-type” refrain and jargon to qualify as an intellectual. It’s that easy. No serious knowledge or expertise or research work or analytical ability or originality or depth or integrity is required.

Besides, it is safe. Others won’t heckle you. Because, these typical Indian leftists have an invisible, informal brotherhood. They support, defend and promote one another, ensure their predominance in the academe and government bodies, and stoutly defend their turf. They are also “eminent” invitees on TV and public functions, seriously ventilating their hackneyed, stale ideas. These windbags have not come up with a single original idea in the last six decades.

This parasitic cabal has its origin in the Nehruvian era with its debilitating socialism and deformed world-view. It still thrives on that discredited ideology, and has spawned the academe and sarkari establishments. It has infested the opinion-making arms including the media, and has become a major stumbling block in progress, for it has managed to pervert sensible discourse.

Thanks to the sowing of Marxist, socialistic, leftist seeds by Nehru in the academia and media, sidelining of alternate streams and of people associated with them, the academia is so compromised that we witness shocking anti-national incidents in our premium universities like the Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), Jadavpur University (JU), and so on, and there is a powerful section of the media and intellectuals who have been supporting them directly or indirectly. It is “liberal” and fashionable to be anti-national!

Blunder-71 : **Mental & Cultural Slavery**

We managed to break the shackles of economic and political slavery. But mental and cultural slavery—that we have willingly adopted!

That Gandhiji had done much to counter that slavishness is well-known. But, what is strange is that little was done in the post-independence period by Gandhiji's chosen protégé Nehru to carry forward Gandhiji's legacy, and rid Indians of their mental and cultural slavery. If anything, it increased, in no small measure to the examples set by Nehru himself, and the policies that flourished under him.

“...several ministers who used to squat on the floor and eat off brass plates or plantain leaves in their homes were now trying to ape Western ways. They contended that Nehru considered only Westernised people modern...”

—Durga Das, ‘India from Curzon to Nehru & After’

Gandhi had once told: “Jawahar wants Englishmen to go but Angrezia to stay. I want Angrezia to go but Englishmen to remain as our friends.” Knowing this, why Gandhi chose Nehru as prime minister is a mystery.

Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859), a British historian and politician, notorious for his ‘*Macaulayism*’ as a conscious British policy of liquidating indigenous culture through the planned substitution of the alien culture of a colonizing power via the education system, had proposed rearing a class of elitist Indians who could act as interpreters between the British and the colonised millions they governed who would be “Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.”

Nehru fittingly answered to that description. Post-independence too, Nehru's mental makeup and cultural mores continued to be British. The official functions and dinners retained the British pageantry, with liveried attendants behind each guest during dinners.

Nehru was reported to have said about himself: “*I am the last Englishman to rule India!*” He had himself admitted: “*...in my likes and dislikes I was perhaps more an Englishman than an Indian. I looked upon the world from an Englishman's standpoint.*”

Right in the heart of New Delhi, at India Gate, staring at all the passersby—including the freedom fighters, the bureaucrats, the politicians, the ministers—stood the statue of King George V for two decades after 1947!

It was only when Bulganin and Khrushchev visited India in late 1955 that India changed the names Kingsway to Rajpath and Queensway to Janpath in New Delhi, lest the guests feel shocked at our slavishness!

However, Khrushchev did not fail to notice the statue of King George V opposite India Gate when driving down Rajpath, and wondered why the relic still stood. But, it was only in 1968 that the statue was removed, and that too upon public outcry!

Malcolm Muggeridge, after seeing Nehru shortly before his death, characterized him as 'a man of echoes and mimicry, the last viceroy rather than the first leader of a liberated India', and regretted that Nehru was much too British in his approach to have been able to bring about significant or radical changes in India.

—Sankar Ghose, 'Jawaharlal Nehru, a Biography'

Bengal Club in Kolkata did not allow Indians till a decade after Independence! Breach Candy Club in Mumbai continued with its sign “*Dogs and Indians not allowed*” well after Independence!!

British openly insulted and humiliated Indians by having such signage in various clubs, train bogies, and other places. Yet, you have many shameless, ignorant Indians still behaving dog-like and praising and admiring the British rule.

Khushwant Singh wrote that he was turned away from Madras Club because he was wearing sandals. In another context he wrote that their group was invited to Delhi Gymkhana for a cocktail only to check whether they were properly anglicised and fitted-in!

JK Galbraith, the US ambassador to India between 1961 and 1963, noted after a visit to an army establishment in India: “The Indian Army officers favour all British Army manners from dress, salute, drill and whisky to moustache. The Queen’s picture hangs prominently in the officers’ mess.”

The affliction in the army extends even to medicine, and to this day! These are the extracts from DNA of 12 June 2012: “Injured and paralysed during the 26/11 terror attacks in Mumbai, commando PV Maneesh [awarded the third highest gallantry medal, Shaurya Chakra, for rescuing hostages during the attacks] had been hoping to start ayurvedic treatment. A recent order by the army, however, has dashed his hopes. The order refuses to change the policy to include alternative system of medicine in its rules for reimbursement despite a Delhi

high court order that had directed the army to formulate a policy in this respect. The [army] order states that changing the rule of reimbursement is not in the interest and ethos of a disciplined force...Maneesh, who hails from Kerala, wanted to try a special ayurvedic treatment, which, he heard, could improve the mobility of his paralysed right side. For the past one year, he has been undergoing treatment in Palakkad, Kerala. Last August, the Delhi HC had asked the army to formulate a policy in three months for setting up a mechanism for reimbursement of ayurvedic treatment undergone by its soldiers. The army, which kept quiet for seven months, has now responded with the order. It says introduction of Indian systems of medicine is not agreed upon due to valid scientific reasons...In the order passed, army has stated that since it has only allopathic doctors it can't administer, and therefore allow, ayurvedic treatment in its hospitals...Ironically, the health ministry has a cell called AYUSH to promote ayurveda. 'Adopting this way is contradicting the existing government policy of 2002 which states that these Indian systems are scientific and should be encouraged. Further, army has made no attempt to recruit ayurvedic doctors or tie up with government ayurvedic hospitals in various states where the troops are posted,' said Maneesh's lawyer..."

What takes the cake are the "Colonially-Brainwashed Non-Self-Respecting Self-Abusive Educated Indian Ignoramuses". It is amazing and baffling that even in the 21st century there exists this class of Indians, young included, who despite their claims to being educated and knowledgeable, unhesitatingly and unabashedly diagnose the "misery that is India" not on the Nehruvian socialistic poverty-perpetuating policies, not on the disastrous Dynasty-driven Congress rule for most of the period since independence, not on the abysmally poor political leadership, but on "Indian-ness; Indian characteristics"—a bizarre self-flagellating racist self-attack. And this tribe has much to admire in the British and the British colonial rule in India. Dictionary definition of a racist is "a person with a prejudiced belief that one race is superior to others". You have the racists like the "White Supremacists". But, what do you call these "reverse racists" who believe "their race is inferior to others"—"*brown inferiorists*"!

Wrote Nirad Chaudhuri in 'Autobiography of an Unknown Indian, Part-II': "*Nehru was completely out of touch with the Indian life even of his time, except with the life of the self-segregating Anglicised set of upper India who lived in the so-called Civil Lines.*"

Chaudhury added that *Nehru* had little understanding of the actual Indian life or culture or of Hinduism; and *was a snob, contemptuous of those who spoke*

English with an Indian accent.

Blunder-72 :
Distorted, Self-Serving Secularism

Nehru's secularism was not dissociation of religion from the state and politics, as it is supposed to be; rather it was leveraging religious minorities for vote-bank politics. Unlike the minorities, Hindus did not vote as a block. They had their own divisions and sub-divisions, and they didn't vote on religious lines. Therefore, doing injustice to the majority religion (Hinduism) didn't affect votes. However, favouring religious minorities did yield vote dividend, as they voted on religious lines.

Nehru was quick to grasp the convenient road to votes and power, and in the garb of secularism, acted in a way as to procure the votes of the religious minorities. Like in the economic field where Nehru laid the foundations of misery through his debilitating socialism; in the political and electoral field, he laid the foundations of harmful, competitive, religious minorityism. If minorityism had led to the prosperity of Muslims and other minorities, one wouldn't mind. But, minorityism was simply emotional exploitation for votes. In fact, with socialism as the economic creed, neither the majority nor the minority could have prospered.

Ram Manohar Lohia believed that Nehru's acceptance of Anglo-Indian cultural values led to his opposing anything that would give the nation a sense of Indianness. Anglophile Motilal Nehru's upbringing of Jawaharlal was such, and, in turn, Jawaharlal's upbringing of his dynasty was such, that they developed a natural aversion for anything Hindu or Indian.

Author of "Discovery of India" failed to discover that despite different physical features, languages, food habits, costumes, and so on, if there was something that bound India together for centuries from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, and from Dwarka to Dibrugarh, it was Hinduism, and its associated religions like Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism that arose from its soil. Yet, rather than strengthening those bonds of heritage and unity, Nehru proceeded to either ignore them, or debunk or distort them.

Jinnah's call for observance of 'Direct Action Day' on 16 August 1946 had led to the *Calcutta Carnage*, or the *Great Calcutta Killings*. It was the worst communal carnage committed by the Muslim League that left 5,000 to 10,000 dead, 15,000 injured, and about one lakh homeless! HS Suhrawardy, who was heading the Muslim League-dominated government in Bengal (and who then came to be known as the "butcher of Calcutta"), rather than controlling the

situation, further instigated the Muslim goondas. Nehru, as the Vice President of the Executive Council (that became the Interim Government on 2 September 1946, with Nehru as the PM) did little to bring relief to the victims on the specious plea of provincial autonomy—that law and order was a state subject, hence the domain of the Bengal Provincial Government. However, when there was a reaction later to the Calcutta killings in Bihar, Nehru himself rushed to Bihar ignoring the fact of provincial autonomy, even threatening the Bihari Hindus with bombings (!): if Muslims kill Hindus, ignore, or make excuses, or hide behind technical grounds; but if Hindus counter-react to Muslim killings, immediately get into action.

Among many other matters where Patel and Nehru had divergent positions was the issue of Ajmer riots soon after independence. In the Ajmer communal riots, notwithstanding the undisputed mischief of the Muslims, Nehru intervened through his private secretary HVR Iyengar to mollify violent Muslims, and instructed that as many Hindus (though they were not the guilty party) as Muslims be arrested—to maintain balance!

Nehru allowed inundation of West Bengal and Assam by Muslims from East Pakistan (Bangladesh) drastically changing its demographics. He allowed massive illegal Christian proselytization in the Northeast leading to fissiparous tendencies in the border states. It didn't dawn upon him that it was the changed demographics that led to the creation of Pakistan; and allowing demographics to freely change in independent India may again lead to divisions.

Nehru was so bereft of any consideration for national heritage that he opposed rebuilding of the Somnath Temple in the name of secularism. Wrote the veteran Congress leader DP Mishra: "...And so far as Nehru was concerned, he had apparently expected secularism to be practised only by the Hindus..."

However, when it came to grabbing power, and getting votes, for Nehru, his "secularism" was no constraint. Nehru, Nehru dynasty and the Congress freely indulged in Muslims and minority appeasement to get votes. The Congress so manoeuvred that in the 1957-elections the Bishop of Kottayam issued an appeal to the Kerala Christians to vote for the Congress. The Congress entered into an alliance with the Muslim League in Kerala to grab power. Nehru forgot all about the Uniform Civil Code laid down in the Directive Principles of the State Policy, which could have vastly benefited Muslims women, once he realised that thanks to Mullahs, and conservative but influential Muslim groups, it could cost his party Muslim votes.

Nehru turned a blind eye to illegal and rampant proselytization by the Christian missionaries that adversely affected national interests. This was particularly so in the Northeast where Nehru went by the advice of the Christian missionaries. The net effect was the secessionist movements in the North-eastern states.

The Constituent Assembly's pledge of building one nation with one citizenship became a victim of Nehru's minority-majority syndrome. All those who opposed him were disparaged, labelled non-secular and communal, and weeded out. Gradually, a coterie around Nehru vigorously spread his defective pseudo-secular, anti-Hindu, poverty-perpetuating socialistic claptrap, and sidelined all those who refused to toe Nehru's line. Leaders who differed exited, and leaders who remained became parrots, bereft of individuality and fresh ideas.

Blunder-73:
Not Seeking Reparations from the British

Like many countries who had demanded apology and reparations from the countries who had tormented them, India too should have assessed, documented and put a financial estimate to the damages done by the British, should have quantified the loot of two centuries, converted them at 1947 prices, and should then have claimed reparation from Britain, along with written and oral apology.

Additionally, a detailed list of all the artefacts, archaeological pieces, precious stones such as Kohinoor and other items stolen from India should have been prepared and reclaimed from the British.

It is worth noting that the arts and treasures that the Nazis took away from the Western countries they attacked and annexed were called loot, and termed unjust, and Germany was forced to return the same to its rightful owner countries. Since the arts and treasures were from the Western countries, and NOT the Asian or African countries, they were loot, and were required to be returned! What double standards!!

However, when the ex-colonies like India themselves did not demand return, where was the question of Britain obliging? With anglophiles like Nehru in the saddle, nothing was done in the matter.

On Kohinoor, Nehru had made a weird comment: “To exploit our good relations with some country to obtain free gifts from it [the convenient contention being that Kohinoor was GIFTED (a lie) to the British!] of valuable articles does not seem to be desirable. On the other hand, it does seem to be desirable that foreign museums should have Indian objects of art.”

Given such indifferent and baffling attitude, little could have been expected from the Dynasty.

Hubris, Ill-Treatment of Others

Blunder-74 :

Nehru & Netaji Subhas Mystery

Netaji Subhas Bose had not died in that so-called air-crash on 18 August 1945 in Taiwan. What happened to Netaji remains a mystery. Nehru and his dynasty have been complicit in ensuring the truth didn't come out.

This is what Nehru had to say about the tragedy at various times:

"I have no doubt in my mind—I did not have it then and I have no doubt today of the fact of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death... There can be no enquiry about that."

—Nehru in reply to a question put in the Parliament by HV Kamath on 5 March 1952.

"I am quite clear in my own mind that all the enquiries we could make have been made and the result is a conviction that Shri Subhas Chandra Bose died as has been stated. There is an abundance of evidence on this, which I consider convincing. In the circumstances, I see absolutely no justification of appointing a commission to make further enquiries."

—Nehru, 1953.

"You ask me to send you proof of the death of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. I cannot send you any precise and direct proof."

—Nehru to Suresh Bose in 1962.

"Subhash is alive and Jawaharlal knows it."

—Suresh Bose in 1947.

Ahmed Jaffer asked Sardar Patel, the then Home Minister in the Interim Government, on 31 October 1946 meeting whether the government had evidence on the death of Bose. Patel's laconic reply was: "No!" When pressed further, Patel replied: *"The government are not in a position to make any authoritative statement on the subject."* When Patel was confronted with Nehru's definitive statement that Bose had died, Patel reiterated that the government had no view in the matter either way.

Nehru did his best for a decade to stall all enquiries into the death of Netaji. But, when he could fend it off no longer, he decided to set up a committee (Shah Nawaj Committee) that would give a report as he desired.

Emilie Schenkl, Netaji's wife, refused to buy the story of 'death by plane crash'. Indeed, Emilie was so much against the said story that she refused to meet Pranab Mukherjee in 1995, the then External Affairs Minister (now the President), when he had approached her to discuss the possibility of transferring Subhas's 'ashes' from Tokyo's Renkoji temple to India.

As per a report: "The Taiwan Government has informed the one-man Netaji Commission of Inquiry that there was no air crash at Taihoku on August 18, 1945, till date believed to have killed Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Disclosing this to newsmen after a routine hearing of the [Justice Mukherjee] Commission [JMC] here, Justice MK Mukherjee said that the Taiwan Government has confirmed to the Commission during its recent visit to that country that no plane crashed at Taihoku between August 14 and September 20, 1945."

An article in Mumbai Mirror of 28 August 2005 titled "*Nehru ditched Bose!*", based on a biography of Dr VJ Dhanan, an INA recruiting officer, says that Bose had not died in that so-called air-crash on 18 August 1945 in Taiwan. The story was a concoction by the Japanese to keep Bose safe in exile. Soviet diplomats had claimed that Bose was in Russia.

For details, please check the author's book '*Foundations of Misery: The Nehruvian Era 1947-64*' available on Amazon.

Blunder-75 : **Nehru & Netaji's Stolen War Chest**

No Indian leader could raise as much amount in the 20th century as Netaji Subhas did for India's freedom. He appealed to the patriotism of an estimated two million Indians in erstwhile British colonies conquered by his Japanese allies for donations to finance his government-in-exile and the Indian National Army (INA). Netaji's personality, his emotive speeches and his unswerving commitment to Indian independence moved the diaspora. Numerous housewives gave away their gold in the cause of freedom. Reportedly, one Habib Sahib gifted all his property of over a crore of rupees; and VK Chelliah Nadar, a Rangoon-based businessman and an INA funder, deposited Rs 42 crores and 2,800 gold coins in the Azad Hind Bank!

After Rangoon, where Azad Hind Bank was headquartered, fell to the Allies in 1945, Netaji retreated to Bangkok on 24 April 1945 carrying with him the treasury, including gold bars and ornaments, in steel boxes. Japan surrendered to the Allied Powers on 15 August 1945, and the 40,000-strong INA followed suit. On 18 August 1945 Netaji boarded a Japanese bomber in Saigon bound for Manchuria, carrying the INA treasure, along with his aide Habibur Rahman. The plane reportedly crashed in Taiwan. The retrieved treasure from the crash site was handed over by the Japanese army to SA Ayer and M Rama Murti of the IIL (Indian Independence League—which had come under Netaji) at Tokyo.

Local Indians in Tokyo suspected that Rama Murti and SA Ayer had jointly defalcated the INA treasure—there was enough circumstantial evidence. Inexplicably, India did nothing to get back the treasure, and rather than setting up an enquiry or hauling up Murti and Aiyer, the government absorbed Aiyer as a director of publicity with the Bombay state, while Murti continued to lead an affluent life-style in Tokyo, in sharp contrast to the devastation all around.

Sir Benegal Rama Rau, the first head of the Indian liaison mission in Tokyo, wrote to the MEA (Ministry of External Affairs), headed by the PM Nehru himself, in India on 4 December 1947 alleging that the INA treasure had been embezzled by Murti. Strangely, the MEA responded it could not be interested in the INA funds! It seems it wasn't just a case of indifference, it was much, much more than that.

KK Chettur, who headed the Tokyo mission/embassy during 1951-52, took up the matter of misappropriation of the INA treasure vigorously. (Incidentally, Jaya Jaitley is Chettur's daughter. She has penned an excellent, worth-reading article

“#NehruSnooped: Truth behind Netaji files” in the connection in www.dailyo.in.) In response, the government sent SA Aiyer on a secret mission to Tokyo. He advised collection of the retrieved treasury from Murti saying it was in his safe custody. Chettur suspected Aiyer-Murti collusion in returning part amount just to close the matter. He recommended to the government a thorough probe in the matter on 22 June 1951. But, nothing came of it. The Indian embassy collected whatever there was at Murti's residence as the INA treasure in October 1951. The same was secretly brought into India from Japan, and was also inspected by Nehru who reportedly made a snide comment: “poor show”. Nehru quoted from Aiyer's report in the parliament in 1952 affirming Netaji's death in an air crash in Taipei. Aiyer was later appointed adviser, integrated publicity programme, for the Five Year Plan.

RD Sathe, an undersecretary in the MEA, wrote a two-page secret note on 1 November 1951 titled “INA Treasures and their handling by Messrs Iyer and Ramamurthi” pointing out the circumstances of the mysterious disappearance of the massive INA treasure and the highly suspicious role of Aiyar(Iyer)-Murti duo; and the token return of a paltry portion from it that raised even more questions. Sathe's note was signed by Jawaharlal Nehru on 5 November 1951 in token of having read it. But, like the earlier notes of Rau and Chettur, Sathe's note too was just filed away by the Nehru's government. However, the matter refused to die.

The Indian ambassador in Tokyo, AK Dar, sent a four-page secret note to the MEA in 1955 advocating a public inquiry into the matter of the disappearance of the INA treasure. He opined that even if the government was not able to get the treasure back, at least the culprits or the likely culprits would be known. He further said that the government's 10-year long indifference in the matter had not only helped the guilty party escape, but had done injustice to the great work and sacrifice of Netaji. Even the Shah Nawaz Committee set up in 1956 to probe Netaji's disappearance had recommended an inquiry into all the assets of Netaji's government-in-exile including the INA treasure.

Yet Nehru did nothing! And, that's baffling.

It was not a small amount. The total treasure, had it been recovered, would have been worth several hundred crore rupees today. Was Nehru's government protecting the embezzlers? Why did Nehru's government accommodate a suspect embezzler SA Aiyar in the government service, and even depute him on a secret mission, as mentioned above? Was Aiyar's report confirming death of

Netaji a quid-pro-quo? Was Nehru afraid Aiyar-Murti duo may spill the beans on the alleged fiction of Netaji's death in the air-crash if they were hauled up?

Dr Subramanian Swamy has even claimed that part of the INA treasure was misappropriated by Nehru! Dr Swamy had levelled this sensational charge way back on 8 February 1978 in his press conference.

Blunder-76 :
Bharat Ratnas—Ignoing the Deserving

Dr Radhakrishnan was awarded Bharat Ratna in 1954, Rajaji in 1954, Nehru in 1955—*when he was himself the PM*—GB Pant in 1957, BC Roy in 1961, Zakir Hussain in 1963, Indira Gandhi in 1971—*when she was herself the PM*—VV Giri in 1975, Kamaraj in 1976, Vinoba Bhave in 1983 and MGR in 1988!

But, Sardar Patel, Subhas Chandra Bose, Dr BR Ambedkar and Gopinath Bordoloi (thanks to whom Assam/NE is in India), being not as great as these worthies (!!), got it later! And, that too when the Dynasty was not in the saddle. It has been that personal in our feudal democracy.

When sounded for Bharat Ratna, Maulana Azad declined and told Nehru it was totally improper for those deciding on the awards to pin the medal on themselves! Azad got it posthumously.

Non-dynasty greats can wait, may even die, there is no hurry. Posthumously, Ambedkar got it in 1990, Sardar Patel in 1991, Netaji Subhas Bose in 1992 and Bordoloi in 1999, when all the four of them should have been the first to get it in 1954.

But, dynasty-scions, great or otherwise, can't be made to wait: two allowed themselves to be awarded Bharat Ratna when they were themselves in power—Nehru in 1955 and Indira Gandhi in 1971—while Rajiv Gandhi was awarded the same soon after his death in 1991!!

Reveals much about Nehru and his dynasty! Of course, the only unjust thing that the Dynasty did was to have left out poor Sanjay Gandhi!

There ought to be a provision to withdraw the awards given if it is later found that those awarded did not really deserve it.

Blunder-77 :
III-Treatment of INA

The Indian National Army (INA) or the Azad Hind Fauj was an armed force formed by Indian nationalists under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Bose in Southeast Asia during World War II to secure Indian independence. “Jai Hind” was coined by Netaji and later adopted by the Government of India and the Indian Armed Forces.

There are reasonable grounds to believe that the Subhas Bose INA’s military onslaught on the British and the INA Red Fort trials of 1945-46 and its consequences (mutinies in the armed forces) were a major factor in the British decision to quit India, and not the Quit India movement (which had petered off in 1942 in a few months) of Congress.

Congress had all through opposed Subhas and INA, but a lot is made of Nehru donning his lawyer’s robes to fight for INA soldiers in their trial by the British in 1945. The reality was that elections were imminent, and INA and Bose being the people’s favourites, Congress and Nehru wanted to get cheap popularity by projecting themselves as pro-INA.

Says Anuj Dhar in ‘India’s Biggest Cover-up’: “...Captain Badhwar reported that the Congress leaders’ turnaround had little to do with any love for their ousted former president [Bose] or the people who fought under his command...He [Asaf Ali—CWC member] travelled across India and discovered that people were overwhelmingly in support of the INA. ‘This inflamed feeling forced Congress to take the line it did,’ Badhwar said...Ali was positive that as and when Congress came to power, they ‘would have no hesitation in removing all INA from the Services and even in putting some of them to trial.’...The top Congress leadership’s duplicitous disapproval of Bose and INA was exposed by numerous pre-1947 statements made by its leaders, especially Nehru.”

Strangely, but expectedly, while Nehru made a big show (pl. see above) of being a part of the Defence Committee to defend the INA veterans Colonel Prem Sahgal, Colonel Gurubaksh Singh Dhillon, and Major General Shah Nawaz Khan (for the sake of votes in the ensuing elections) in the Red Fort Trials of 1945–46, after independence Nehru as PM refused to reinstate them in the army—hypocrisy and selfishness unabashed and unlimited!

As expected from Nehru and the Congress, rather than honouring and rewarding them, the INA-veterans were debarred from the Indian Army by the Government of independent India! Why? Because, that was the way the British

and Mountbatten wanted, as INA soldiers had fought against them. As per certain sources, this was a British precondition for independence. And, Nehru being an anglophile and a chela of his guru Mountbatten, faithfully carried out the British bidding. Reportedly, Mountbatten (as Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia then) even went to the extent of dynamiting the INA Memorial in Singapore in 1945.

The above was in sharp contrast to Jinnah who had inducted Muslim INA soldiers into the Pakistani army. The INA personnel remained ineligible for the Freedom Fighters Pension till 1972.

Captain Ram Singh Thakur (1914–2002) was an INA soldier of Nepali origin. He was also a musician and a composer. His famous patriotic compositions include "Kadam Kadam Badhaye Ja, khushi kē geet gāē jā, yē zīndagi hai qāum kī, tū qāum pē lūtāē jā..." and "Subh Sukh Chain". His final years were difficult. He was also initially denied the status of a freedom fighter by the government.

Blunder-78 :

III-Treatment of Netaji Bose

Apart from dragging its feet in instituting an enquiry into Netaji's death, manipulating the enquiry report, being hostile to INA, and not recognising Netaji for Bharat Ratna, Nehru's Government had been so hostile that in 1947 it refused to put up his portrait in the Parliament House.

Nehru and the Congress of independent India under him showed unpardonable ingratitude to the real man behind India's freedom.

As per an article on the web, in a confidential memo dated 11 February 1949 under the signature of Major General PN Khandoori the government recommended: "The photos of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose be not displayed at prominent places, Unit Lines, Canteens, Quarter Guards or Recreation rooms."

This is from the foreword of S Nijalingappa to the book, 'Inside Story of Sardar Patel—The Diary of Maniben Patel: 1936-50':

"Strangely, however, while the collected works of many other leaders [notably, Nehru and Gandhi] have been published by the government since Independence, the collected or selected works of two foremost leaders, namely Sardar Patel and *Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose*, were never taken up by any official agency. It is for this reason that we constituted the Sardar Patel Society, had it registered, collected funds and published the Collected works of Sardar Patel in fifteen volumes..."

Blunder-79 :
Ill-Treatment of Sardar Patel

When Sardar died in Mumbai, Nehru, who himself attended the funeral, advised the then President, Dr Rajendra Prasad, to not attend the funeral—the reason given by him was that as per the protocol, President need not attend funerals of ministers!

So he treated Sardar Patel as a mere minister! Was there such a protocol? Cooking up things! And, who was Nehru to advise and direct the President? What hubris! Dr Rajendra Prasad, of course, attended Sardar's funeral. But, Nehru was not happy about it! What can one say about such a person?

IAS officer MKK Nair writes in his memoir 'With No Ill Feeling to Anybody': "Immediately after he got the news about Sardar Patel's death, Nehru sent two notes to the Ministry of States [which was headed by Sardar Patel]. The notes reached VP Menon, the then Secretary to the Ministry. In one of the notes, Nehru had asked Menon to send the official Cadillac car used by Sardar Patel to the former's office. The second note was shocking. Nehru wanted government secretaries desirous of attending Sardar Patel's last rites to do so at their own personal expenses."

The above was confirmed when KM Munshi wrote: "When Sardar died in Bombay, Jawaharlal issued a direction to the Ministers and Secretaries not to go to Bombay to attend the funeral. Among the Ministers, I was in Matheran (Bombay) at the time. Sri NV Gadgil, Sri Satyanarayan Sinha and Sri VP Menon disregarded the direction and attended the funeral. Jawaharlal also requested [President Dr] Rajendra Prasad not to go to Bombay; it was a strange request, to which Rajendra Prasad did not accede."

It is hard to believe the supposedly cultured person Nehru could be so ungracious and could go to such lengths upon death of a colleague, who happened to be also a Deputy Prime Minister, a great national leader, and a freedom fighter!

In the capital, in the prime area, you have Rajghat for Gandhiji, Shanti Van for Nehru, Shakti Sthal for Indira Gandhi, Veer Bhumi for Rajiv Gandhi, Vijay Ghat for Shastri, Kishan Ghat for Charan Singh, besides many museums or memorials for the Nehru-Gandhis, but no memorial to either Subhas Bose or to Sardar Patel in the capital, when next to, or equally with, Gandhiji the latter two deserve the highest respect!

Incidentally, there is no samadhi of Sardar Patel in Delhi, or elsewhere in

India, although people like Sanjay Gandhi have their samadhi at a prime location in Delhi!

The residence in Delhi where Sardar lived when he was the Deputy Prime Minister of the country has been razed and there is no sign that he had ever lived there. Nehru's house, on the other hand, has been turned into a museum.

Nehru's meanness and small-mindedness can be gauged from the fact that he made NO arrangements to have a portrait of Sardar Patel put up in the Central Hall of Parliament, like it was done for other prominent leaders. Apparently, he saw to it that such a portrait was not put up, like he had done in case of Netaji Subhas Bose.

It was Maharaja Jivaji Rao Scindia of Gwalior, who had since become the first Rajpramukh of Madhya Bharat, who felt much irked by that glaring (and, apparently, deliberate) omission, and presented a Sardar Patel's portrait to be put up in the Central Hall of Parliament in 1954.

Blunder-80 :

Ill-Treatment of Sardar's Daughter Maniben

Maniben Patel, the only daughter of Sardar Patel, switched to khadi at a tender age of 16, and started working regularly at the Gandhi Ashram in Ahmedabad. Most of the garments that Sardar Patel wore after 1921 were woven out of the yarn made by Maniben. When just 17, she put all her gold bangles, earrings and other ornaments, gold wrist-watch, and jewels in a bundle of cloth and, after obtaining her father's nod, deposited them in the cause of freedom at the Gandhi Ashram.

Unlike Nehru's daughter, Indira Gandhi, Maniben was a freedom fighter, who actively participated in the non-cooperation movements. During the Bardoli Satyagraha in 1928, she along with many other ladies helped out in the camps. For her active role in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930 and thereafter she was arrested and imprisoned on several occasions. In January 1932, she was arrested along with Kasturba Gandhi for defying a ban on meetings in Bardoli. She was released in May 1932, but was re-arrested in July 1932 for defying a ban in Kheda, and was sentenced to 15 months imprisonment, which she spent in Belgaum jail. For her role in arousing people in the villages in Rajkot she was arrested December 1938. Gandhi was much impressed with her work, and had remarked that Maniben was showing her mettle; and that he had not seen another daughter like her.

Under Gandhi's "Selective Disobedience", Maniben was arrested in December 1940 and sent to Belgaum jail. Released in May 1941, she again wished to court arrest, but Gandhi stopped her, looking to her frail health.

Later, Maniben underwent prolonged imprisonment during the Quit India Movement of 1942. She was arrested along with Kasturba Gandhi in August 1942, and was in detention at the Aga Khan's Palace in Pune, where Gandhi was lodged. Maniben was released in March 1944. But, she was rearrested in May 1944 in Bardoli in Gujarat, and was sent to Surat jail. From Surat she was sent to Yerwada jail.

She didn't get married, and served her father till his death in 1950. Here is a shocking episode relating to Maniben based on various sources, mainly '*I too had a dream*', an autobiography of Dr Verghese Kurien of Anand Dairy fame, as told to Gouri Salvi, the author.

Sardar Patel did not have any bank balances or property. Even though he was earning substantially as a very successful lawyer, once he got into the Freedom

Movement, he gave up everything. Sardar was the very example of Gandhian simplicity. He used to say that, “Bapu has told that those in politics should not hold property, and I hold none.”

When Sardar Patel expired, he had left nothing for his daughter. With Sardar no more, she had to vacate the house. She was left all alone to fend for herself, with no money and no house. Sardar had instructed her to give a bag and a book to Nehru upon his death.

After Sardar’s death—which happened in Mumbai—Maniben dutifully went to Delhi, took an appointment with Nehru and met him. She handed over to him the bag and the book. It seems the book was an account book, and the bag contained rupees 35 lacs. After having done so, she waited for Nehru to express sympathy, enquire as to what she intended doing, where would she stay, her monetary position, whether she wanted anything, and what he could do for her. But, Nehru showed no interest and said nothing. After some time, she left disappointed.

She returned to Ahmedabad to stay with a cousin. Neither Nehru, nor the Congress Party bothered about her well-being. Such was the fate of the lady who gave her all to the nation and of the daughter of a person who made India what it is today! Contrast this with the Nehru Dynasty.

Blunder-81 :
Ill-Treatment of Dr Rajendra Prasad

Among the freedom fighters, Dr Rajendra Prasad had about the best academic record, and had a roaring law practice which he gave it all up in the cause of freedom. Keeping his legal competence and suitability in mind, he was unanimously elected as the president of the Constituent Assembly. But, he was not a Nehru-camp follower. Nehru therefore tried his level best to scuttle his appointment, but failed.

To scuttle Dr Rajendra Prasad's chance to become the first president of India, Nehru had even bluffed! As per the book "Nehru: A Troubled Legacy" by a former intelligence officer RNP Singh, Nehru wrote to Rajendra Prasad on 10 September 1949 that he (Nehru) and Sardar Patel had decided that "the safest and best course" would be to have C Rajagopalachari as the first president of India, even though Nehru had never discussed the matter with Sardar Patel or obtained his concurrence.

The bluff was exposed when Rajendra Prasad referred the issue to Patel. RNP Singh says: "Nehru had resorted to desperate measures to prevent Prasad from occupying the position of president and these measures included blatant lying."

Nehru didn't want Dr Rajendra Prasad to get elected for the second term as the President of India in 1957. Towards that end he carried out a campaign, even alleging in his speeches that people in high positions have a tendency to cling to their posts—not realising the irony of that comment on himself! However, despite Nehru's manoeuvrings, Dr Rajendra Prasad got re-elected.

As per 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After' by Durga Das, when Dr Rajendra Prasad was ill and it was suspected that he might not survive, Nehru was reported to have deputed Lal Bahadur Shastri, his trusted lieutenant, to search a place of funeral as far away as possible from that of Gandhi! Nehru didn't want Dr Rajendra Prasad to get any prominence. However, Rajendra Prasad survived.

When Dr Rajendra Prasad died in Bihar, and his funeral was held in Patna, Nehru did not attend, saying that he was busy with election campaign fund collection in Gujarat! That time Nehru had advised Dr Radhakrishnan, then President, "I do not see any reason for you to go." Dr Radhakrishnan had replied: "No, I think I must go and attend the funeral. That respect is due to him and must be paid. I think you should give up your tour and come with me." But, Nehru stuck to his programme.

Nehru was so conceited he wouldn't allow President Dr Rajendra Prasad to visit foreign nations on the plea that he didn't project a secular enough image abroad! In his first term, the President only visited Nepal. It was only in the second term that he visited some other Asian nations including Japan, and made an excellent impression on host nations. The US President Eisenhower invited him to the US, but Nehru scuttled the proposal.

KM Munshi had invited President Dr Rajendra Prasad to attend the inaugural function of the rebuilt Somnath temple. Protesting vehemently, Nehru opposed his attending the ceremony. What did Nehru think he was? He would command what the President should or should not do? What hubris? Dr Rajendra Prasad, of course, attended, and commented: "I would do the same thing [attend inauguration] with a mosque or a church if I were invited... Our State is neither religious nor anti-religious." Dr Prasad made an excellent speech on the occasion.

Blunder–82:

III-Treatment of Dr Ambedkar

Like for Dr Rajendra Prasad, Nehru did not attend Dr BR Ambedkar's funeral either.

In all relevant fields, Ambedkar was far more competent and knowledgeable than Nehru. He was also much wiser, and experienced, having handled important portfolios before independence.

Compared to lower second division graduation of Nehru, Ambedkar's qualifications were BA (Economics & Political Science, Bombay University), MA (Economics, Politics, etc., Columbia University, USA), MSc (Economics & Finance, London School of Economics), PhD (Finance, Columbia University), DSc (Doctor of Science, Economics, London School of Economics), and Barrister-at-Law (Gray's Inn, London).

India would have immensely benefited if either Sardar Patel or Ambedkar had become India's first PM. But, did Nehru try to make use of Ambedkar's immense talents? No. Nehru wanted only chamchas and hangers-on. Here is an extract from the resignation letter of Dr Ambedkar from the Nehru's cabinet dated 27 September 1951:

“As a result of my being a Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, I knew the Law Ministry to be administratively of no importance. It gave no opportunity for shaping the policy of the Government of India. We used to call it an empty soap box only good for old lawyers to play with. When the Prime Minister [not voluntarily, but at the instance of Gandhi] made me the offer [Law Minister], I told him that besides being a lawyer by my education and experience, I was competent to run any administrative Department and that in the old Viceroy's Executive Council, I held two administrative portfolios, that of Labour and C.P.W.D., where a great deal of planning projects were dealt with by me and would like to have some administrative portfolio.

“The Prime Minister agreed and said he would give me in addition to Law the Planning Department which, he said, was intending to create. Unfortunately the Planning Department came very late in the day and when it did come, I was left out. During my time, there have been many transfers of portfolios from one Minister to another. I thought I might be considered for any one of them. But I have always been left out of consideration. Many Ministers have been given two or three portfolios so that they have been overburdened. Others like me have been wanting more work.

“I have not even been considered for holding a portfolio temporarily when a Minister in charge has gone abroad for a few days. It is difficult to understand what is the principle underlying the distribution of Government work among Ministers which the Prime Minister follows. Is it capacity? Is it trust? Is it friendship? Is it pliability? I was not even appointed to be a member of main Committees of the Cabinet such as Foreign Affairs Committee, or the Defence Committee. When the Economics Affairs Committee was formed, I expected, in view of the fact that I was primarily a student of Economics and Finance, to be appointed to this Committee. But I was left out...”

In an article ‘A Case For Bhim Rajya’ in the *Outlook* magazine of 20 August 2012 the author S Anand describes a shocking incident:

“Let us begin at the end, with one of the worst humiliations in Ambedkar’s life, less than three months before his death. On September 14, 1956, exactly a month before he embraced Buddhism with half-a-million followers in Nagpur, he wrote a heart-breaking letter to prime minister Nehru from his 26, Alipore Road residence in Delhi. Enclosing two copies of the comprehensive Table of Contents of his mnemonic opus, *The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Ambedkar suppressed pride and sought Nehru’s help in the publication of a book he had worked on for five years: ‘The cost of printing is very heavy and will come to about Rs 20,000. This is beyond my capacity, and I am, therefore, canvassing help from all quarters. I wonder if the Government of India could purchase 500 copies for distribution among the various libraries and among the many scholars whom it is inviting during the course of this year for the celebration of Buddha’s 2,500 years’ anniversary.’

“Ambedkar had perhaps gotten used to exclusion by then. The greatest exponent of Buddhism after Asoka had ruthlessly been kept out of this Buddha Jayanti committee presided over by S. Radhakrishnan, then vice president... Worse, when Nehru replied to Ambedkar the next day, he said that the sum set aside for publications related to Buddha Jayanti had been exhausted, and that he should approach Radhakrishnan, chairman of the commemorative committee. Nehru also offered some business advice, gratuitously: ‘I might suggest that your books might be on sale in Delhi and elsewhere at the time of Buddha Jayanti celebrations when many people may come from abroad. It might find a good sale then.’ Radhakrishnan is said to have informed Ambedkar on phone about his inability to help him.

“This is the vinaya that the prime minister and vice-president of the day

extended to the former law minister and chairperson of the drafting committee of the Constitution. It was suggested with impertinence that Ambedkar could set up a stall, hawk copies and recover costs...”

It is a shocking lack of grace and courtesy. Couldn't they have spared a few thousand for Ambedkar's great works—when the Government could spend lacs on all kind of sundry and selected and collected works of Nehru and Gandhi. The Nehru Government had also refused to publish the collected or selected works of two other great leaders: Sardar Patel and Netaji.

Blunder-83 :

III-Treatment of Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee

Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee (1901–1953) was the son of Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee (1864–1924), renowned as '*Banglar Bagh*' or the '*Tiger of Bengal*'.

Ashutosh Mukherjee was a great educationist who had helped found many educational institutions like the Bengal Technical Institute, College of Science, University College of Law, and the Calcutta Mathematical Society, and served as the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta during 1906–1914.

Thanks to his educational excellence, Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee became the youngest Vice-Chancellor of the University of Calcutta at the age of 33 in 1934, and remained in that post till 1938. He was an eloquent speaker.

He joined the Hindu Mahasabha in 1939. He was the Minister for Industry and Supply in Nehru's cabinet after independence, and joined the Congress. He had supported the partition of Bengal, and ensured that the whole of it did not go to Pakistan.

He opposed the Nehru-Liaquat Pact of 1950 (please see details under 'Nehru-Liaquat Pact' above), and in protest resigned from the cabinet, and left the Congress. He co-founded the Bhartiya Jan Sangh on 21 October 1951, and became its first President.

He opposed Article 370 related to J&K (Dr Ambedkar, Sardar Patel and others too had expressed their disapproval of it), and opposed the decision to grant Kashmir a special status with its own flag and Prime Minister, and according to which, no one, including the President of India, could enter into Kashmir without the permission of Kashmir's Prime Minister!

He coined a slogan: "Ek desh mein do Vidhan, do Pradhan aur do Nishan nahi challenge" (A single country can't have two constitutions, two prime ministers, and two national emblems).

In protest, he tried to enter Kashmir on 11 May 1953, but was arrested at the border, and was lodged in a run-down, dilapidated structure by the then PM(!) of J&K Sheikh Abdullah! Reportedly, all this was in the knowledge of Nehru, and was done with his concurrence.

Even the British had not treated the Congress freedom fighters, especially the Gandhian leadership, in such an abject manner. Nehru wrote books sitting in British jails, and he had himself written in his autobiography that his treatment in the British jails was very good, and full of respect.

Dr Mukherjee was already not in good health, and such deliberately inhuman treatment exacerbated his dry pleurisy and coronary (heart) troubles. So callous and cruel was the attitude of the J&K government and Sheikh Abdullah (and Nehru must have been fully aware of the goings on) that Dr Mukherjee was taken to a hospital full month and a half after his arrest!

And, so careless and incompetent was the treatment that he was administered penicillin, even though he had informed the doctor-in-charge of his allergy to penicillin.

Couldn't Nehru have flown-in heart-specialists, or shifted him to New Delhi! Poor Dr Mukherjee, he succumbed to the ill-treatment on 23 June 1953.

Such a major death, and that too in government custody, and yet no Enquiry Commission was set up, despite demands. Dr Mukherjee's mother (his wife had expired long ago) wrote to Nehru asking for a proper, independent enquiry, but "democratic" Nehru turned down, or turned a deaf ear to all such requests. Nehru stated dismissively that he had made enquiries, and was satisfied there was no wrong-doing. Was he a detective? Such an immature comment from a PM! And, if there was no wrong-doing, he could have let an Enquiry Commission establish it.

It was not democracy, it was an autocracy under Nehru. There have been numerous major instances during the Nehruvian era where cases that could adversely affect Nehru's image or that of his government were either not taken cognizance of, or not booked, or enquiries were not conducted. And, if so done under public pressure, the same were subsequently scuttled. And, where they could not be scuttled, their reports were suppressed, or kept classified, like the Henderson-Brooks/Bhagat Report on the 1962 India-China War debacle. Such things are impossible in the current media age. Had even 5% of the current media existed then, Nehru would have stood exposed much earlier in his term.

Atal Behari Vajpayee, ex-PM, had accompanied (as a journalist) Dr Mukherjee up to the point he was arrested. He alleged in 2004: "When Mookerjee decided to violate the permit rule by entering J&K without a permit, we thought the Punjab government would arrest him and prevent him from proceeding further. However, that did not happen... Later, we came to know that the J&K government and Nehru government had entered into a conspiracy, as per which it was decided that Mookerjee would be allowed to enter J&K but not be allowed to leave..."

Vajpayee alleged the then Nehru government feared that if Mookerjee was not

allowed to enter J&K, questions would be raised on integration of the state with the country, which had several drawbacks, and therefore “the J&K government was told that he should not be allowed to come back”.

Blunder-84 :
Ill-Treatment of Bordoloi

That great man from Assam, Gopinath Bordoloi, despite his achievements—far more than most of the Indian leaders, with the added uniqueness that like Sardar Patel, who was instrumental in expanding the Indian territory by about 40% by accession of the Indian Princely States, Bordoloi helped expand India's geographical boundary to Assam and the Northeast—was not awarded *Bharat Ratna* by the successive Congress Governments starting from Nehru, while many, not as deserving, got that award.

He had opposed Nehru before independence, and for good reason—to include Assam in India—and that was the reason Nehru and his dynasty deprived him of well-deserved Bharat Ratna.

It was only when a non-Congress (Vajpayee) government came to power that Bordoloi, a veteran Congressman, was awarded the Bharat Ratna posthumously in 1999.

Blunder-85 :

Ill-Treatment of Bhagat Singh & Azad

Despite popular requests to make sparing the life of Shahid Bhagat Singh and others a condition in the on-going negotiations between Gandhi and the Viceroy Irwin, the Gandhi–Irwin Pact signed on 5 March 1931 remained silent on the matter, and Gandhi and the Congress did effectively precious little to save the braves.

There were no demonstrations, no hartals, no satyagraha and no fasts organised by the Congress Party or Gandhi; nor did Gandhi include the matter of commutation of sentences of Bhagat Singh and others while negotiating release of the Congress prisoners of the Salt Satyagraha and related matters with Viceroy Irwin for the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

Gandhi used to report back each day's discussions and agreements with Irwin to the CWC members in the evening; and all agreements were with their concurrence. If Gandhi and CWC had so desired they could have refused to further proceed with the talks with the Viceroy if he was not agreeable to deal with Shahid Bhagat Singh and colleagues differently.

Nehru was the Congress president then, serving his second consecutive term. As Nehru was young then and used to pose as a firebrand leftist-socialist freedom fighter, people had tremendous hope from him that he would leave no stone unturned to save Shahid Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev. But, Nehru did NOTHING.

Chandrashekhar Azad had personally met Nehru in Allahabad to persuade him to use his good offices as the president of the Congress to have the sentences on Shahid Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev commuted.

Rather than doing what Nehru should have, given the way he used to project himself as a young uncompromising freedom fighter, what Nehru wrote about his meeting with Chandrashekhar Azad in his autobiography is not just disappointing, it is disturbing. The casual, disrespectful way he wrote about Chandrashekhar Azad is shocking. Here are some extracts: “I remember a curious incident about that time, which gave me an insight into the mind of the terrorist group [*How he calls them. Not freedom fighters, but terrorists!*] in India... A stranger came to see me at our house, and I was told that he was Chandrasekhar Azad [*even though Azad was famous by then, and there is no way Nehru wouldn't have known*]... He had been induced to visit me because of the general expectation (owing to our release) that some negotiations between the

Government and the Congress were likely. He wanted to know, if, in case of a settlement, his group of people would have any peace. Would they still be considered and treated as outlaws; hunted from one place to place, with a price on their heads, and the prospect of the gallows ever before them? [*Would people like Azad plead like this?*]...”

Going by what Saswati Sarkar, Shanmukh and Dikgaj write in their article “*Did Nehru betray Chandrasekhar Azad to the British?*” dated 26 February 2016 in www.dailyo.in which reproduces and dissects what Nehru has himself written in his autobiography about his meeting with Azad, Nehru appears to have been highly economical with truth.

Blunder–86:

Ill-Treatment of Veer Savarkar

Savarkar's case is unique, shocking, and painful for all patriots, and well-meaning people. He suffered the most and brutally in the British jails (Kaalapani). As if that was not enough, independent India under Nehru again threw him into jail by framing a false case, and defamed him!

What did Savarkar get for all his sacrifices? Humiliation! It was doubly humiliating because the humiliation was inflicted not by the British, but by Independent India—that too by framing false charges against him. What could be worse? Top Gandhian leaders who suffered the least in the British jails (details further down) leveraged all their “sacrifices” to grab power and pelf post-independence, but people like Savarkar who gave their all (and who were far more erudite, wise and capable than most top Gandhians) were humiliated, defamed, ignored and forgotten.

Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (1883–1966), aka Swatantryaveer Savarkar, was a freedom fighter, poet, writer, playwright, forceful orator, rationalist, atheist, and reformer, who vigorously advocated end of Hindu caste-system, and strongly disapproved of orthodox Hindu beliefs and practices. He built the *Patit Pavan Mandir* in Ratnagiri, open to the all, including Dalits. A section of orthodox Brahmins of Maharashtra opposed his reform; but he earned praise and respect from Dr BR Ambedkar.

Savarkar became a revolutionary while a student in India and England. In London, he was associated with the *India House* set up by the revolutionary Shyamji Krishna Varma. He founded *Abhinav Bharat Society* and the *Free India Society*. He also brought out publications espousing the cause of complete independence of India by revolutionary means. His famous book ‘*1857—First War of Independence*’ had so much rattled the British that they had put a ban on it, confiscating all its copies within six months of its release.

Arrested in 1910 for his revolutionary activities, he made a daring attempt to escape while being transported from Marseilles, France. With constable waiting outside, Savarakar entered the toilet, broke the window, wriggled out somehow, and jumped into the ocean from a sailing ship to swim his way to Marseilles port. His friends (including Madam Bhikaiji Cama) were supposed to pick him up there, but they were late by a few minutes, and the French Police caught him and returned him to the British cops—chained and under stricter watch.

He was sentenced to two life terms of imprisonment totalling fifty years! He

was imprisoned in the Cellular Jail in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands (Kaalapani), and treated cruelly and inhumanly. He must have been the first poet in the world to have been deprived of pen and paper in a jail. He improvised and used thorns and nails to compose his writings on prison walls.

Notably, VD Savarkar's elder brother, Babarao Savarkar, was also a revolutionary who was lodged in the Cellular Jail in *Kaalapani*. His younger brother too was a revolutionary. It was a family of brave patriots and revolutionaries.

Shahid Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Chandrashekhar Azad were admirers of the Savarkar family, and drew inspiration from them. Revolutionary Madanlal Dhingra who shot Sir Wyllie in London in 1909 after a failed assassination attempt on the then Viceroy, Lord Curzon, was a keen follower of Savarkar.

Savarkar was elected president of the Hindu Mahasabha in 1937, and served in that post till 1943. After the Muslim League's *Pakistan Resolution* of 1940 Savarkar could foresee the problems ahead for Hindus in India, and wanted Hindus to be militarily well-equipped. Therefore, rather than the 'Quit India 1942', Savarkar gave a call to the Hindus to take advantage of the opportunity of getting militarily trained by joining the army in the British war effort in WW-II. Fortunately, a very large number of Hindus responded to Savarkar's call, and joined the British army—finally making it Hindu-majority from its earlier position of Muslim-majority. That helped tremendously after partition and independence, providing a large army to India, the Muslims in the army having mostly opted for Pakistan. Unlike Gandhi and Nehru, Savarkar knew what a country of the size of India needed to defend itself. Dr Ziauddin Ahmed, the then VC of AMU, had indeed raised an alarm on the increasing number of Hindus enlisting in the armed forces, thereby reducing the proportion of Muslims. But for Savarkar's whirlwind recruitment drive during WW-II, Pakistan, after partition, would have had 60–70% of the soldiers, enough to overwhelm India in the border areas in a conflict—this debt to Savarkar is sadly unacknowledged.

'Quit India', which Savarkar opposed, fetched nothing for India or the Congress in real terms, fizzled out in two months, and proved counter-productive (for details, please check the other forthcoming book of the author on Sardar Patel and the Independence Movement). Hindu Mahasabha activists protested Gandhi holding talks with Jinnah in 1944, denouncing it as appeasement. Savarkar considered Gandhi a naive leader and a sissy. He stated that although Gandhi "babbled compassion and forgiveness", he "has a very narrow and

immature head”.

Savarkar was years ahead of Gandhi-Nehru on many counts. Gandhi, Nehru and the Congress gave a call for complete independence for India very late at the end of 1929, what Savarkar had called for way back in 1900! Bonfire of foreign clothes on which the Gandhians claim copyright was performed much earlier by Savarkar in 1905, later copied by Gandhi. Upon creation of Pakistan, Savarkar had rightly predicted: “Till a nation based on religious fanaticism exists beside India she won’t ever be able to live in peace.”

In the 1930s and later, when the Muslims of East Bengal (now Bangladesh) began migrating to Brahmaputra valley in Assam for livelihood, pooh-poohing the grave warnings from sane quarters, pseudo-secular, naive Nehru made an irresponsible statement: “Nature abhors vacuum, meaning where there is open space how can one prevent people from settling there?” Savarkar responded with his masterly prediction: “Nature also abhors poisonous gas. The migration of such large numbers of Muslims in Assam threatened not just the local culture but would also prove to be a national security problem for India on its north-east frontier.”

Savarkar, in a statement on 19 December 1947, heartily supported an independent Jewish state; and demanded restoration to the Jews their entire historical holy land and Fatherland of Palestine. Terming it as an appeasement to Muslims by Nehru, he expressed regret at India's vote against the creation of the Jewish state at the UN (for details, please see ‘Nehru & Israel’ above).

Noting China’s invasion of Tibet in 1950, and Nehru’s weak-kneed policy, Savarkar had predicted in 1954 itself: “After what China has done to Tibet, kowtowing to the Chinese would whet its appetite. I won’t be surprised if China feels emboldened to swallow Indian land tempted by India’s weak-kneed approach.”

Savarkar and other prisoners in *Kaalapani* were subjected to brutally inhuman treatment. Had even 5% of that treatment been meted out to the likes of Nehru, they would have given up the fight for freedom. However, the sacrifices of Savarkar and others were not recognised.

What is most noteworthy is that while many who suffered in the fight for freedom remained faceless and unacknowledged, Nehrus enjoyed all the fruits of their sacrifice—and many, many times more. It was the most profitable investment they made, with returns thousands of times more, and through the decades, for the whole dynasty and descendants!

Talking of suffering and sacrifices, many were tortured and whipped in jails. Did Nehru get that treatment? No. Nehru himself describes in his book of severe whipping of other imprisoned freedom-fighters in jails. For most Gandhites, especially the top ones, the jails were, relatively speaking, tolerable. That their life in jail was not all that terrible can be inferred from an episode described by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was in Ahmednagar prison along with Nehru and others: Upon their remonstrance with the jailor for serving them food on iron plates, the jailer had apologised and had the plates replaced by China plates and dinner set. As the cook in the jail could not prepare food to their taste, a better cook was soon appointed!

Nehru had access to newspapers, magazines and books in Naini and other jails. He also had ample supply of reading and writing materials. He wrote *Glimpses of World History* in Naini jail between 1930 and 1933; *An Autobiography* during 1934-35 in Bareilly and Dehra Dun jails; *Discovery of India* between 1942 and 1946 in Ahmednagar Jail.

It is said that Sir Harcourt Butler, the then Governor of UP, had even sent quality food and a champagne bottle to Motilal Nehru in his prison, out of consideration for their association. They did not show similar indulgence to others. Even Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a non-Gandhite, was ill-treated in prison, which severely affected his health.

Writes Nehru in his autobiography: “Personally, I have been very fortunate, and almost invariably, I have received courtesy from my own countrymen and English. Even my gaolers and the policemen, who have arrested me or escorted me as a prisoner from place to place, have been kind to me, and much of the bitterness of conflict and the sting of gaol life has been toned down because of this human touch...Even for Englishmen I was an individual and not merely one of the mass, and, I imagine, the fact that I had received my education in England, and especially my having been to an English public school, brought me nearer to them. Because of this, they could not help considering me as more or less civilized after their own pattern...” Contrast this with the fate of thousands of freedom fighters who really suffered.

And, it is worth noting that it was not as if the Gandhian Movement won independence for India. The main reasons for India gaining independence were the precarious economic condition of the UK thanks to WW-II, and their colonies, particularly India, becoming a huge financial drag, rather than a source of income; realisation by the British that they could no longer trust the Indian

Army to suppress Indians and continue to rule over them, after the doings of the INA under Subhas Bose, the INA Red Fort trials of 1945-46 that mobilised public opinion against the British on an unprecedented scale, Indian Naval Mutiny of 1946 and Jabalpur Army Mutiny of 1946, both partially provoked by the INA trials; and exhaustion of the British militarily, administratively, financially, and above all, mentally after the WW-II to continue with their colonies. In fact, by the end of the Second World War territorial colonisation had ceased to be viable enterprise. The last movement of the Congress for freedom—Quit India—happened in 1942, many, many years prior to the grant of independence, and fizzled out in mere months. In fact, many of the princes of the princely states and other lackeys of the British were trying to impress upon the British not to leave, as there was little pressure upon them to do so.

Savarkar became a fierce critic of the Indian National Congress. No wonder an all-out attempt was made to falsely implicate him in the Gandhi Murder Case. Manohar Malgaonkar, after extensive research, published ‘The Men who Killed Gandhi’ in 1977. He does not point to any guilt on Savarkar's part. Here is an extract from the author's introduction in the book:

“...Dr Bhimrao Ambedkar’s secret assurance to Mr. L.B. Bhopatkar, that his client, Mr V.D. Savarkar had been implicated as a murder-suspect on the flimsiest grounds. Then again, certain other pertinent details such as the ‘doctoring’ of a confession by a magistrate whose duty it was only to record what was said only came out in later years...”

Malgaonkar's book also states:

“...Why were the police so anxious to implicate Savarkar? Was it merely that, having failed in their proper function to arrest Nathuram before he killed Gandhi, they were making a bid to save face by raising the bogey of some sensational plot which involved a big leader who, providentially happened to be in bad odour with the government of the day? Or was that government itself, or some powerful group in it, using the police agency to destroy a rival political organization or at least to destroy a fiercely uncompromising opposition stalwart?

“Or, again, was the whole thing a manifestation of some form of phobia peculiar to India, religious, racial, linguistic, or provincial, that made Savarkar a natural target for the venom of some section of society?

“...Savarkar being made an accused in the Gandhi-murder trial may well have been an act of political vendetta. Of course, Badge [approver who implicated

Savarkar], on his track record is a slippery character and not to be relied upon, but he was most insistent to me that he had been forced to tell lies, and that his pardon and future stipend by the police department in Bombay depended upon his backing the official version of the case and, in particular that, he never saw Savarkar talking to Apte, and never heard him telling them: ‘Yeshaswi houn ya.’

“...[Dr BR Ambedkar confided to Bhopatkar, Savarkar's lawyer:] ‘There is no real charge against your client; quite worthless evidence has been concocted. Several members of the cabinet were strongly against it, but to no avail. Even Sardar Patel could not go against these orders. But, take it from me, there just is no case. You will win.’...”

It seems Nehru leveraged the emotions against the assassination of Gandhi to fix Savarkar, and ensured that no one came in the way—not even senior cabinet colleagues: they must have been wary lest they be accused or defamed of trying to protect an accomplice in the assassination of Gandhi.

Malgaokar's further wrote:

“...He [Savarkar] was sixty-four years old, and had been ailing for a year or more. He was detained on 6 February 1948, and remained in prison for the whole of the year which the investigation and the trial took. He was adjudged ‘not guilty’ on 10 February 1949. The man who had undergone twenty-six years of imprisonment or detention under the British for his part in India’s struggle for freedom was thus slung back into jail for another year the moment that freedom came...”

It has been reported that in the wake of the assassination of Gandhi, and the rumours that got floated, a mob went on a rampage against Savarkar in Mumbai. Yet, the state government then under the Congress made no arrangements to ensure security for Savarkar (who was bed-ridden) and his kin. His family members and friends had to somehow defend his house using sticks when the mob attacked it. In the process, his younger brother Dr Narayanrao Savarkar (also a freedom fighter) was seriously injured, and later succumbed to his injuries.

The ‘democratic’ and ‘freedom-loving’ ‘cultured’ Nehru tried to destroy all those who were opposed to him. Although the court acquitted Savarkar, he was so defamed that he could not rise again. After his acquittal, Savarkar was arrested by the government for making ‘militant Hindu nationalist speeches’, and was released after agreeing to give up political activities—what then was the difference between the British India and Nehru’s Independent India! Nehru had

forbidden the Congress members to participate in any public function honouring Savarkar; and had refused to share the stage with him during the centenary celebrations of India's First War of Independence (which was called so for the first time by none other than Savarkar in his book that was banned by the British).

Savarkar was a multi-talented personality, who had also coined the terms that have been in common usage since: 'Chitrapat', 'Doordarshan', 'Nirdeshak', 'Sampadak', 'Mahapaur', 'Parshad', etc.

Savarkar renounced medicines, food and water with effect from 1 February 1966, terming it as atmaarpan (fast until death). He died on 26 February 1966. Not a single minister from the Maharashtra or Central Cabinet showed up at the cremation ground to pay homage to Savarkar. The Speaker of the Parliament turned down a request that it pay homage to Savarkar.

After the death of Nehru, Lal Bahadur Shastri, as PM, approved payment of monthly pension to Savarkar, like it was done for other freedom fighters. In 1970, Indira Gandhi's government issued a postal stamp in honour of Veer Savarkar. The commemorative blue plaque on India House, London fixed by the Historic Building and Monuments Commission for England reads 'Vinayak Damodar Savarkar 1883-1966 Indian patriot and philosopher lived here'. The airport at Port Blair, the capital of Andaman & Nicobar, has since been named as Veer Savarkar International Airport. It was in February 2003 when the NDA government was in power that the portrait of Swatantryaveer Savarkar was put up in the Central Hall of Parliament—Congress Party MPs boycott the function, without ever offering a public explanation for their disgraceful behaviour.

There has been a demand that Savarkar should be conferred the Bharat Ratna posthumously.

Blunder-87:
III-Treatment of Public

Brigadier (Retd.) BN Sharma narrates an episode in his book, *India Betrayed*, which is upsetting:

The author, then a young boy, lived in Shri Gandhi Ashram, Meerut, where his uncle was General Secretary. Nehru was to come to Meerut to deliver an election speech for Provincial Assembly Elections of 1937 at the Town Hall. Upon arrival he was angry at the arrangements. A man responsible for the arrangements bowed before Nehru with folded hands requesting him not to leave.

However, in full public view of thousands crowding the place, Nehru kicked the man, already prostrate at his feet, and kept doing so. Everyone was shocked and dismayed. Kriplani then physically pulled Nehru away. To the young mind of the author, this left a deep mark.

The author writes that Nehru was arrogant, and that he exulted in public display of anger. Nehru perhaps considered it a sign of royalty to be short-tempered and to show one's temper, and anger and impatience publicly.

The dynasty of Kotwal Gangadhar Nehru (Jawahar's grandfather) indeed had pretensions of royalty!

The extract given below is from the chapter "Nightmare of Nehruism" from the book "How I Became Hindu" by Sita Ram Goel. Goel states that Nehru came to address a public meeting in the Gandhi Grounds adjacent to the Chandni Chowk in Delhi in 1935 when he (Goel) was a student of the seventh standard:

"There was a thunderous applause as Pandit Nehru came up on the rostrum, greeted the people with folded hands, and was formally introduced by a local Congress leader.

"But the next thing I saw made me rub my eyes. The great man had become red in the face, turned to his left, and planted a slap smack on the face of the same leader who was standing near the mike. The mike had failed. Pandit Nehru was gesticulating and shouting at the top of his voice as if something terrible had happened.

"Meanwhile the mike started functioning again so that he could be heard all over the place. He was saying: 'Dilli ki Congress ke karyakarta kamine hain, razil hain, namaqul hain. Maine kitni bar inse kaha hai ke intizam nahin kar sakte to mujhe mat bulaya karo, par ye sunte hi nahin (the leaders of the Congress in

Delhi are lowbred, mean, and mindless people. I have told them time and again not to invite me if they cannot make proper arrangements. But they pay no heed).’ ...

“This was a new experience for me. I had attended many public meetings in my village, at my district headquarters, and in Delhi. I had never witnessed such wild behaviour on a public platform. Of course, those other speakers were not so big as this one.

“Was it the way the big ones behaved? I wondered. I found it difficult to admire a man who had not only shouted at but also slapped someone who was placed lower than him in life, and who was in no position to hit back. And that too for no fault of the victim. Even as a young boy, I had nothing but contempt for bullies.”

Blunder-88 : **Special Treatment for Edwina**

Osama Bin Laden was buried at sea by the Americans. Edwina too was buried at sea in 1960, as per her will—a tribute to Mountbatten's naval career.

British frigate *Wakeful* which carried her body to the sea off Spithead, a channel off southern England, was escorted by an Indian frigate *Trishul*—such importance India gave her. Contrast this with the treatment meted out by Nehru to Sardar Patel, Netaji Subhas, Dr Ambedkar and Dr Rajendra Prasad after their death—that we covered above!

Going by Alex Von Tunzelmann's 'Indian Summer: The Secret History of the End of an Empire', Nehru-Edwina affair, at least from the Indian cultural angle, does seem bizarre—bizarre in the sense that Mountbatten allowed the brazen stuff. There can be nothing abnormal or bizarre in a man and a woman loving each other.

The normal situation is they are married to each other, or both are unmarried, or both are divorcees. But, in a situation where one is a widower, and the other is married, the social expectation is that the one who is married would take a divorce, and then do as she pleases with the other.

The abnormal situation is where a married person knowingly allows his wife to have affair with another. And, perhaps for political reasons.

One can always say, "So what?" Indeed so, for one is not raising a moral issue—only flagging a relationship. And perhaps the relationship went beyond the spiritual and the platonic—but that's a conjecture, not something definite and known.

What is interesting is that it was not some fleeting romance. It continued through the years, well past the Independence, and right till her death. When she died in an Indonesian Hotel in Borneo on 21 February 1960, a number of letters were found strewn around her—said to be the love letters of Nehru!

Nehru's correspondence with Edwina contained matters of national importance, for he used to share his thinking with her. Hence, they are of vital historical importance, and not just something that are merely personal—of no consequence. Yet they are being treated as if they are the personal property of the Dynasty, and are being kept a closely guarded secret. Stanley Wolpert mentions in the preface to his book, 'Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny', he tried to access the letters, but failed.

Reportedly, Nehru used to go to London to be with Edwina almost every year, or she used to come to India, and stay with him—after independence.

Also, reportedly, one of the jobs of Krishna Menon as High Commissioner in London, for which he used to gladly volunteer, was to receive Nehru at the airport at any hour and drive him down to Edwina's secluded country house—Broadlands.

Says Stanley Wolpert: "Nehru flew off again to London...Krishna Menon was waiting with the Rolls, as usual, at London's airport and drove him back to Edwina shortly before midnight...Indira was upset by her father's unrelenting obsession with 'that Mountbatten lady'!"

While one doesn't really care for the personal side of it—considering they were two consenting adults—could such relationship have compromised Nehru or India's political cause in any way?

Edwina Mountbatten, about whose relationship with Nehru a lot has been written, would have most likely persuaded Nehru to go by the counsel of Mountbatten and take the Kashmir matter to the UN.

Reportedly, Mountbatten himself admitted that he used his wife to get an insight into Nehru's mind and, where needed, influence Nehru when he failed to bring him round to his view. Philip Zeigler, Mountbatten's biographer, stated that Mountbatten encouraged loving relationship between his wife and Nehru—to this end.

Maulana Azad, a pro-Nehru person, expresses bewilderment in his autobiography as to how a person like Jawaharlal was won over by Lord Mountbatten; mentions Nehru's weakness of being impulsive and amenable to personal influences, and wonders if the Lady Mountbatten factor was responsible.

MJ Akbar in his book, 'Nehru: The Making of India', writes about the encounter of Russi Mody, once the Chief Executive of Tata Steel, with Nehru at Nainital where Nehru was staying with his father and UP Governor, Sir Homi Mody:

"Sir Homi was very pukka, and when the gong sounded at eight he instructed his son to go to the Prime Minister's bedroom and tell him dinner was ready. Russi Mody marched up, opened the door and saw Jawaharlal and Edwina in a clinch. Jawaharlal looked at Russi Mody and grimaced. Russi quickly shut the door and walked out."

Tunzelmann writes in 'Indian Summer': "Jinnah had been handed a small

collection of letters that had been written by Edwina and Jawahar. ‘Dickie [Mountbatten] will be out tonight—come after 10.00 o’clock,’ said one of Edwina’s. Another revealed that ‘You forgot your handkerchief and before Dickie could spot it I covered it up.’ A third said ‘I have fond memories of Simla—riding and your touch.’” Incidentally, Jinnah did not use the letters.

Writes K Natwar Singh in his article ‘Jawaharlal Nehru and the Mountbattens’ in The Hindu of 14 November 2008: “I once asked Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Nehru’s sister, if the rumours about her brother having an affair with Edwina Mountbatten were true. She was herself a diva and uninhibited in her conversation. She said to me: ‘Of course he did. And good for him.’”

Blunder-89 :
To Hell with Gandhism & Simplicity

Gandhi had spoken thus of Jawaharlal Nehru: “He says whatever is uppermost in his mind, but he always does what I want. When I am gone, he will do what I am doing now. Then he will speak my language too.” Had Gandhi watched from the heavens the acts of his chosen protégé, he would have been shocked

Rather than his master's simplicity, Nehru adopted ostentatious Viceroy-like trappings. Nehru, who had ranted against rajas, maharajas, nawabs and feudal lords, adopted lordly and feudal ways, and allowed the same to prosper under his “democratic” watch.

After Independence, Gandhiji had suggested that the Governor-General of free India should stay in a modest accommodation, rather than in the huge and imposing Viceroy palace—later named as Rashtrapati Bhavan—which should be converted into a public hospital. But, Nehru advised that an alternate suitable accommodation was not available! What bluff!! The place next in stateliness and grandeur to the Viceroy palace was the residence of the British Commander-in-Chief, then called Flagstaff House. Leaving his York Road residence, Nehru occupied this magnificent house, which was later renamed as Teen Murti Bhavan. Others followed Nehru's example, occupying huge, spacious bungalows. British had deliberately designed these palaces and bungalows to intimidate the natives, appear remote, and command respect. What was the logic of the leaders of free India to follow in their footsteps?

Wrote MO Mathai, Special Assistant to Nehru from 1946 to 1959, in ‘Reminiscences of the Nehru Age’:

“At 10 Downing Street, the British Prime Minister has only a couple of suites of rooms for his personal use. All the rest are offices and a few are public rooms...Tage Erlander, the Social Democratic Prime Minister of affluent Sweden, for twenty years lived in a three room flat. His wife was a teacher... The Swedish Government did not provide him with a car. The PM and his wife had a small car which they drove themselves. They could not afford to keep a driver... Labour Prime Minister Joseph Chiefley of rich Australia lived in two rooms in a second class hotel near his office. His wife preferred to live on their farm... The PM was not provided with a car. He walked between his hotel and his office...”

What an irony! The non-Gandhians of the rich, Western countries were being Gandhi-like; while the “Gandhian” Nehru and other Congressmen of our own poor, pathetic, post-independent India were adopting the ways of rajas and

maharajas, whose feudal, privileged lifestyle they had been cursing all through!

Writes S. Nijalingappa in 'My Life and Politics': "But after becoming prime minister, he [Nehru] left 17 York Road, a fairly large building and moved to possibly the second largest official residence next to the Rashtrapati Bhavan. His reason of doing so was that official dignity required it. In contrast, I may mention the instance of Ho Chi Minh, the president, Vietnam. When I saw him during his visit to Delhi, he said he had only a few clothes and only two pairs of sandals and lived in a small house. But, in independent India, simple living became an exception. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, throughout his stay in Delhi, whether before or after accepting office, lived in a small house at Aurangzeb Road, only large enough for himself and his daughter."

Nehru loyalist, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, had remarked: "Jawaharlal has performed the last rites not only of Gandhi but of Gandhism as well."

Wrote Durga Das in 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After': "Mrs. [Vijayalaxmi] Pandit [Nehru's sister] told me: 'I never travel without Ahmed (her liveried peon). The common people know me to be a Minister because Ahmed is with me. They salaam "Ahmed's livery".' Nehru himself realised this well enough when he became the Prime minister and had a retinue of peons and security staff—several times the size any Viceroy had had—when he moved among people."

Blunder-90 : **Full of Hubris**

It has been said by many that it was Nehru's intransigence and arrogance post-1937 elections that caused irreparable rift with the Muslim League, and contributed to the call for the formation of Pakistan by Jinnah (this is covered earlier under 'Putting-off Jinnah: Setting him on Path to Pakistan').

In a conference of Asian-African countries in 1955, the then prime minister of Sri Lanka, John Kotelawala, took some potshots at communism and related things. Nehru later accosted him and asked why he had not shown his speech to him beforehand. Pat came the reply from John Kotelawala to Nehru, "Why should I show you my speeches—you don't show me yours!"

Sankar Ghose in his 'Jawaharlal Nehru, a Biography', quotes Zhou Enlai: "I have met many leaders of the world...I met Khrushchev. I met Chiang Kai-shek, I've met American generals. But I have never met a more arrogant man than Nehru. I am sorry to say this, but this is true."

In a lighter vein, it is also said that Zhou Enlai was in fact so highly cheesed off with Nehru's condescending behaviour that he inflicted India-China war to avenge it! During his talks with Kissinger, he was reported to have said that Nehru had become so cocky that China decided to put down his cockiness.

Nehru had visited the US in 1961. Writes Kuldeep Nayar in 'Beyond the Lines': "Kennedy organised a breakfast meeting between Nehru and top US economists and foreign policy experts. Nehru was late for the meeting and generally monosyllabic in his responses. The breakfast ended in 20 minutes. Some of them reported this to Kennedy who remarked in the presence of his aides that Nehru had 'lived too long'."

Says Dalai Lama in his autobiography, 'Freedom in Exile': "I [Dalai Lama] then explained [to Nehru] that I had not originally intended to seek India's hospitality [feeling let down by Nehru's attitude] but that I had wanted to establish my Government at Lhuntse Dzong. Only the news from Lhasa had changed my mind. At this point he [Nehru] became rather irritated. 'The Indian Government could not have recognised it even if you had,' he said. "I began to get the impression that Nehru thought of me as a young person who needed to be scolded from time to time. During other parts of the conversation he banged the table. 'How can this be?' he asked indignantly once or twice. However, I went on in spite of the growing evidence that he could be a bit of a bully..."

Reportedly neither Viceroy Linlithgow nor Wavell gave any importance to

Nehru. Many British found Nehru to be vain and supercilious. In their dealings after Indian independence, the Americans too found Nehru to be arrogant.

Here is another example of Nehru's snobbishness. Even as India was going around the world with a begging bowl, Nehru didn't flinch from being sarcastic on Southeast Asian countries and their economy, which had actually been doing far better.

Writes Durga Das in 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After' (Rupa, Page# 342): "A talk with the Prime Minister of Thailand was very revealing. He complained that Nehru had characterised the Thai Government as corrupt [what about the financial scandals in the Nehru government?] and said the country had a 'Coca-Cola economy'.

"Thailand, the Prime Minister explained to me, had a long tradition of independence, and if she had taken shelter under the U.S. umbrella it had done so to safeguard her independence. If Nehru was willing to underwrite their security [it's another matter India could not secure itself!], the Thais would prefer to be with India since Thai culture was predominantly Indian [he didn't know that India under Nehru didn't care for its own culture!].

"When I suggested that a visit by the King and the Prime Minister to India would improve matters, he replied that their very experience Ambassador in New Delhi had warned them against inviting an insult by undertaking such a visit. They treated their ruler as a demi-god, and he would not go to India unless assured of a cordial welcome."

Many wonder what made Nehru so full of hubris? It could certainly not have been on account of his academics or his earnings or his books. If he knew good English, so did many others. If he was educated in England, so also many others. If he was westernised, so were many others. If he had participated in the Freedom Struggle, so had thousands, and many had actually sacrificed much more.

If he thought he was exceptionally intelligent and knowledgeable and a great leader, how come he made so many blunders—all major, with severe long term adverse consequences for the country. In fact, Nehru was able to dominate only because while he was still active in politics, almost all his equals and superiors and potential rivals died—Gandhi, Subhas Bose, Patel, Ambedkar.

This "arrogance" aspect of Nehru is not being highlighted as a personal negative. Because, if it were just that, one may ignore it. It actually had harmful consequences for the nation. It came in the way of others sharing their opinions

with him freely—they were afraid of his temper and arrogance. This prevented him from heeding sane advice of others and doing course-correction even when things were going down-hill. He made blunder after blunder with no one daring to counsel him.

There is an episode in Stanley Wolpert's book, 'Nehru: A Tryst with Destiny', which is as revealing as it is disturbing. While in England he wrote to his father, Motilal, that his [Jawaharlal's] chief reason for wishing to go to Oxford was that "Cambridge is becoming too full of Indians!" Such airs from the grandson of the policeman, Gangadhar Nehru!

MJ Akbar in 'Nehru: The Making of India', writes about an episode in the pre-independence period of a number of poor villagers from the villages near Allahabad approaching him to verify their actual extremely pathetic condition first-hand. Nehru was not particularly enthusiastic about taking up the mission, particularly in the hot summers. However, "He was touched when he learned that hundreds of ill-clad villagers had built roads for him overnight so that his car could take him to the innermost recesses of rural India; and saw the eagerness with which they physically lifted his car when it got stuck in the soft mud. After all, he was still an Indian sahib in a hat and silk underwear."

Nehru's height of hubris was, of course, Panchsheel. It cost India dear. In the post-Independence euphoria of the 1950s Nehru strutted the world stage as a pacifist leader of the newly-formed group of non-aligned nations; and patted himself for engineering the Panchsheel Agreement (please see Blunder-27 for details) of 1954 with China that he believed would ensure peace with our northern neighbour, despite the sane warnings by many that he was thereby substituting a peaceful neighbour Tibet with a dangerous enemy all along the long northern border from the Karakoram ranges in Ladakh to Burma that would cost India heavy to defend. The wise Chinese leadership must have viewed Nehru with amusement and disbelief that a leader of a great nation like India could be so irresponsible and lacking in foresight.

Even before independence and decision on partition, it was Nehru's hubris and irresponsible statements in a press conference on the 1946 Cabinet Mission Plan (that envisaged united but federal India: please see Blunder-7) that led Jinnah to take a hard stand on Partition. Partition and Pakistan could have been avoided had Nehru been circumspect, and had checked his hubris.

Nehru was reported to have said: "I am the last Englishman to rule India!" Nehru believed his destiny was to rule the brown masses; and that he alone knew

how best to do it. No wonder, he ignored sane advice. Examine, dissect and analyse any Indian problem, and you would notice Nehru's unmistakable fingerprints—such was his hubris.

Dynacracy (Dynastic Democracy)

Blunder-91 : **Dynastic Politics**

Jawaharlal Nehru was unfairly promoted by his father, Motilal Nehru; and in the true dynastic tradition, Nehru promoted Indira, who in turn, even more shamelessly promoted her progeny. When Motilal Nehru retired as the Congress president in 1929, he made sure by lobbying with Gandhi that his son, Jawaharlal, ascended the gaddi, over the heads of people much more senior and capable than him.

Dynacracy (Dynastic democracy) is bad not just because we resent some having unfair advantage, it is bad because it results in mediocrity, and it discounts merit. The quality of leadership emerging out of a dynastic process can never be really good. For proof, check for yourself the unutterable underachievements of the underwhelming leadership of the dynasts, at the state or at the Centre, and how it has become worse and worse down the generation: for example, the reverse geometric progression from Nehru down to Rahul Gandhi.

Although Indira Gandhi had done little work for the Congress, she was made a member of the Congress Working Committee in 1955—entry directly from the top, rather than rising from the bottom.

In 1957, Indira was made member of the powerful Central Election Committee. In 1958, she became a member of the Central Parliamentary Board—Nehru made a vacancy for her by himself resigning from the Board: a deft move!

She was then made President of the Congress in 1959, to the astonishment of all, after an intense behind the scenes drama, managed through others by Nehru. Nehru had thus commented on her being made the President: “I am proud of Indira Gandhi as my daughter, my comrade and now as my leader. It is superfluous for me to say that I love her. I am proud of her integrity and truthfulness.”

Nehru had also started developing her as a public figure. By making her the official host, Nehru gave her exposure to foreign dignitaries and guests. Nehru also sent her on various foreign assignments like India’s representative to the UNESCO’s Executive Board, and tour of foreign countries on Nehru’s behalf.

After the 1962-debacle, and his plunging popularity, Nehru used the Kamaraj

Plan of 1963 to clear the way for Indira from the seniors. Morarji Desai, who had not objected then, later told Brecher about the Kamaraj Plan: “It seemed to have been motivated not only to get rid of him [Morarji] but also to pave the way for Mrs Gandhi to the Prime ministership.” S Nijalingappa, who had been the Congress President, had noted that Nehru had always been grooming his daughter for the Prime Ministership.

Acharya Kriplani believed that the evils in the country emanated from the top and that Nehru was the pace-setter in abusing patronage and power.

“Another such instance I remember was when Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was president of India...I used to call on him whenever I was in Delhi...In his talks with me, as I believe with others too, he was very frank and open. One day, when I went to him he said, “Nijalingappa, today I put my foot down. Do you know why?” He then continued, ‘Pandit Nehru comes to me and wants me to make his sister, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, vice-president of India. I had to tell him, “You are the prime minister of India, your daughter is the president of Indian National Congress and you want your sister to be vice-president. What would people say? I cannot have it.” I put my foot down and sent him away.”

—S. Nijalingappa, ‘My Life and Politics’

Durga Das writes in his book ‘India from Curzon to Nehru & After’ that in 1957 in his weekly column in Hindustan Times he wrote Nehru was building up his daughter for succession. He says he had checked with Maulana Azad before writing the column, and Azad had said he too had independently reached the same conclusion. Even Govind Ballabh Pant had the same opinion. Later, when Nehru remonstrated with Durga Das on the column, to mollify Nehru, Durga Das assured him that what he had written would bring good publicity to Indira and would stand her in good stead—at which Nehru felt happy and smiled.

India is a country whose culture and thinking has been so vitiated by the dynasts and their hangers-on and direct and indirect beneficiaries that even the indefensible—dynastic democracy—is defended. Dynacracy-tolerant “intellectuals” often question: Are the dynasts trying to get in undemocratically? No. Then, what is the problem. If one fights an election, gets elected, and becomes a political leader, what illegality or wrong is committed—everything is democratic and above board.

Although obviously absurd, one is not surprised to hear such pleas. What is happening dynasty-wise, be it Nehru-Gandhi or DMK or Lalu or any of the

scores of other dynasties, is so obviously wrong that it should neither attract any defence, nor any arguments to demolish that defence. However, the original Dynasty has been able to do such publicity over the decades through the compliant MSM, intellectuals and netas that the reverse has happened: questioning the dynastic succession has become questionable!

A prominent argument advanced goes like this. Dhirubhai Ambani's sons are also businessmen. That is, businessmen's wards generally become businessmen. Progeny of artists—singers, musicians, writers, and others—also become artists. Sons or daughters of Bollywood actors also become actors. Doctor's wards also become doctors. Farmer's son is often a farmer. Dynasty is everywhere. So why pick on only political dynasties? This superficial argument can fool only the gullible. Progeny of doctors, artists, actors, businessmen becoming also doctors, artists, actors, businessmen affect them only, not others. *However, progeny of a neta/politician becoming a neta affects people at large. It is the requirement of a democracy to be representative and hence non-dynastic. Business houses or art houses or professional establishments are not required to be representative.*

In politics too, you once had hereditary rajas and maharajas and kings and queens. But the days of those retrograde systems are gone—now replaced by a democratic system. In a way, therefore, hereditary or dynastic succession is unconstitutional. Then, why bring it in from the backdoor. It is against the spirit of the Constitution. Dynastic succession is feudal, inappropriate, unjust, and harmful for the nation, whether it happens in the communist North Korea or the Islamic Saudi Arabia or in the democratic or dynacracic India.

To the pro-dynasty “Don't they fight elections and win” argument, the question is: How do they win? A far more competent competitor would not even get the party-ticket. But for the dynasty scion, it is for the asking. They get on a platter the constituency nursed for years by their parents. And they have money to splurge to get elected. After getting elected, a high position within the party-organisation or the government is assured to them—something denied to the many much more competent but less-connected contenders. The whole thing is unjust, unfair and undemocratic.

Don't those who defend dynasties on the specious plea that “after all they get elected” realise that it is thanks to their running, or rather, running down the country for decades that India could do no better than rank among the poorest and the most corrupt countries in the world and remains in “dark” ages, with millions of malnourished children, unjust criminal-justice system loaded against

the poor and the powerless; continuing reprehensible caste, class and religious distinctions and social evils; and vicious, indifferent and incompetent Babudom.

The sophists question: “Are you saying that children of a politician should be denied a political career? Would that be democratic?” It is not that the progeny or relatives of a politician should be denied a political career. Only thing is that they should not be allowed to derive an unfair advantage. That is possible when things are enforced to be genuinely democratic, nepotism is rooted-out, and talent and ability take the front-seat. Is there any inner-party democracy in the political parties? What if the person from the so-called dynasty also has merit? Well, does he or she have more merit compared to the many with merit? If yes, fine. But, let there be a fair comparison, competition and debates.

The principal hazards of dynasty politics are the following: (a)It discounts merit and prevents competent from rising. (b)It thwarts internal democracy in political parties. (c)Dynastic politics, nepotism, institutionalised corruption and non-accountability go together. (d)Dynastic politics is always at the expense of the nation. (e)It is the biggest menace. It’s the foundation of India’s misery.

The dynastic politics that Nehru started and thus sanctified has now vitiated and poisoned our whole democratic system. Following in his footsteps, now most leaders promote their own dynasty in politics. It has become all pervasive. Now, it’s not just Nehru’s heirs—we now have heirs and relatives in nearly every state.

The funny thing is that the younger political leaders from the dynasties, who have got the position for free, thanks to the power-structure built by their parents, were being called by the media the *young turks*! How can successors in a dynastic-line be ever *young turks*! They may be young, but certainly not *turks*. The nomenclature “*Young Turks*” or “*Jön Türkler*” in Turkish came to signify young reformists and revolutionaries—not the dynasts and the status-quoist lording over their parental turf that the current Indian crop is. In any case, how can HMPs—Hereditary MPs—be young turks?

Blunder-92 :
Nehruvian Gift: Democracy or Dynacracy?

Not seldom are those who tend to be critical of Nehru reminded it is thanks to Nehru India is a democracy, whose fruits all Indians are enjoying—including criticising him. Does the contention hold?

Elections were conducted in India during the British times too. Congress had not only won the 1937-elections and formed ministries in many states; post elections, with power in their hands, they had already become so corrupt that Gandhi had desired disbanding of Congress after independence. The last pre-independence elections were held in 1946. Independent India inherited many democratic institutions, including election machinery—only it needed a boost to handle universal suffrage.

It was, in fact, the Constitution of India framed under Dr Ambedkar, and passed by the Constituent Assembly comprising scores of worthies and headed by Dr Rajendra Prasad, which had provided for universal adult franchise and democratic setup. So, how can the credit be given to Nehru?

Nehru's own election as the President of Congress in 1946, that led to his becoming India's first prime minister upon independence, was undemocratic. For details, please see Blunder-6.

In the long-term interest of the nation, a responsible democrat would have assiduously worked to establish a multi-party, or at least a two-party democratic system. However, too keen for himself and his dynasty to forever remain in power, he saw to it that India's nascent democracy was not nurtured for a robust opposition. He tried all the tricks to defame, belittle and weaken the opposition. What he worked for and established was Dynacracy (Dynastic democracy), where the dynasts, though they got elected, so manipulated the party machine that both the government and the party ran to their diktats. Unlike Nehru, Gandhi and Patel did not promote their own.

Blunder-93 :
Election Funding, Exposure & Publicity

One of the main causes of corruption is election funding. That was the only area for which Rajaji advocated nationalisation. But, Nehru did not listen. Nehru nationalised what he should not have, and did not nationalise what he should have—the state-funding of elections. Had he done so, one could have said he was genuinely a true democrat. It would have helped the poor opposition take roots in the nascent democracy. Opposition was starved of funds. Besides, they did not have any publicity machinery at their disposal.

Nehru ranted against capitalists, but if they obliged his party by filling-in its election war-chest for a quid pro quo, Nehru's "principles" never came in the way.

As all the election funding was being received by the Congress—of course, in expectation of quid pro quo—why would Nehru have tried to strengthen the Opposition by arranging funding for them? Nehru took care to jealously guard the large donations received by the Congress from corporates.

When Rajaji, deeply concerned with Nehru's economic policies taking India to dark ages, formed Swatantra Party with like-minded persons, and fought the elections, Nehru dubbed them as pro-money-bags. Those adjectives remained stuck to them, even though it was the Congress Party which was getting all the money from the money-bags, and Swatantra Party was finding it very hard to find money to fight elections.

Nehru, his government, and the Congress Party monopolised radio. There was a demand to make All India Radio (AIR) an autonomous body; and even Nehru had once stated that he would like the AIR to be modelled on the lines of BBC; but looking to its huge reach, and the tremendously unfair advantage it provided him of hogging all publicity, Nehru conveniently forgot restructuring and reforming it. AIR never made any adverse comments on Nehru or his policies or the government. AIR became the propaganda vehicle of Nehru, and later his dynasty, providing no space to the opposition.

Nehru and the Congress used carrot and stick to ensure the print-media was compliant. Nehru's pictures, statements and speeches used to crowd out the views and comments of the opposition.

Government's vast Publication Division was dedicated to publishing all kinds of selected and collected works and letters and speeches of Nehru and his mentor Gandhi, but steered clear of giving any importance to the far better works and

letters and speeches of Sardar Patel or Netaji Bose or Dr Ambedkar.

PIB's (Press Information Bureau) photographic department liberally released photos of Nehru on various occasions providing him vast publicity.

Nehru and his dynasty so misused and manoeuvred the AIR, the government-controlled institutions, the academia, and the media as to project a picture and an impression to the public at large that only they could lift India out of poverty, that only they could keep India united, that only they knew how to govern a country as big and varied, that only they could protect the minorities and the weaker sections, and that they alone could be saviours of India!

In short, Nehru and his dynasty tried all their tricks to ensure India remained a one-Party-dominated democracy; and that their dynasty remained overwhelmingly dominant in that party. What could have been a more irresponsible, and a worse disservice to the nation!

Blunder-94 :
Communal, Vote-Bank Politics

Congress which tom-toms its secular credentials started its communal politics from the Nehruvian era itself. Massive Muslim migrations from East-Bengal were ignored to get Muslim votes to win elections in Assam. When asked, Nehru had advised even a person of the stature of Maulana Azad to contest elections from a predominantly Muslim area, despite Zakir Hussain's hang-ups, keeping in mind the secular faith of the Congress—vote-bank politics took precedence.

Since the Nehruvian times, Congress played on the insecurity of dalits and Muslims to get their votes, without really doing anything concrete to make them feel secure and equal citizens of independent India. Neither the exploitation and ill-treatment of dalits was stopped, nor the communal riots halted, nor were they offered better economic opportunities.

In short, the Nehru-Gandhi-Dynasty-perpetuation formula is this: Take money from the corporates and the rich, as a quid-pro-quo, of course, for money is essential to winning elections. However, engage only in pro-poor talk publicly. Talk secular always, but play communal politics to get votes. Project Congress as pro-poor, pro-minority, pro-dalit and pro-disadvantaged. However, let the poor remain poor forever, and let the minorities and dalits feel insecure forever—how else to get their votes? Use carrot and stick to keep MSM (Main Stream Media) on your side.

Wrote Durga Das in 'India from Curzon to Nehru & After' (Page# 377-78): "But Azad revised his opinion of Nehru in the last two years of his life... Towards the end of his life, Azad realised that the best protection for the Muslims was the goodwill of the Hindus and a strong government. He told me... that Nehru's policies had weakened the administration and that his economic theories had failed to improve the living conditions of the people, especially the Muslims."

Blunder–95:
Promoting Incompetents & Sycophants

Nehru's hubris was such that he thought he was the wisest person around who knew what was good, and what was bad, which was the right way, and which wrong. He, therefore, looked for "Yes-men". Those who would toe his line, do his bidding, and even anticipate his likes and dislikes, and act accordingly.

No wonder the frank, forthright and competent were sidelined. This became glaringly obvious in the way Nehru and Menon played favourites in the army, politicised postings and promotions, and awarded top positions to those who ultimately let India down in the India-China war.

The position was such in the first general elections in 1952 that whoever got a Congress ticket was likely to win. It was said that even a lamp-post carrying a Congress ticket would win. Gandhi had desired after independence that honest, competent and deserving persons from varied spheres willing to serve the country must be inducted. In 1952, there was a golden opportunity to identify and induct such persons. But, did Nehru do so? No. Patel was no more. Nehru had a free hand. He herded-in as many loyalists and sycophants as he could.

Nehru even saw to it that Dr BR Ambedkar—by far the most erudite and competent—was defeated! Expectedly, the 1952-election results threw up a large band of Congress MPs and MLAs who were courtiers, sycophants and hangers-on.

Maulana Azad had commented: "We are still feudal, but what has distressed me is that many good persons have been denied tickets because the trusted courtiers had labelled them as anti-Nehru."

Wrote Louis Fischer: "Without free criticism and potent opposition, democracy dies. Without political criticism and opposition, a nation's intellect, culture and public morality stagnate; big men are purged and small men become kowtowing pygmies. The leaders surround themselves with cowards, sycophants and grovelling yes-men whose automatic approval is misread as a tribute to greatness."

Nehru promoted and consulted people like Krishna Menon, about whom Khushwant Singh who had worked in the Indian High Commission in London under Krishna Menon had the following to say in his autobiography 'Truth, Love and a Little Malice': "...he [Krishna Menon] set up many sub-organisations of his India League and got money from rich Indians and his English friends as donations to his organisations; in return, he gave the latter contracts for supply of

arms to India. He had no scruples in business matters. He was also a congenital liar and regarded truth as good enough for the simple-minded and lying as the best exercise for the mind... Why Menon got where he did under the patronage of Pandit Nehru remains, and probably will remain, unexplained... General Shiv Varma summed him up aptly when he said, 'Menon was a bachelor, the same as his father.'”

David Lloyd George, the British PM during 1916-22, had advised Winston Churchill : “It is important for a Prime Minister to be surrounded by people who could stand up to him and say, not once but thrice, ‘No’.” One wonders if it was Nehru’s hubris, dictatorial mindset, overt arrogance, or covert inferiority complex that made him shun stalwarts like Patel, Ambedkar, and many such persons far more competent than him, and embrace sycophants, grovelling pygmies, and lesser persons.

Blunder-96 :
Not Limiting the Term of the PM

If Nehru was a true democrat, he should have taken a page out of the US Constitution, and limited the term of a prime minister to just two terms—like the President of the US.

Not only that, on completion of two terms passing on the baton to one's kin should also have been prohibited, to ensure dynasties did not take over politics. Dynasties have a vested interest in continuance at the expense of the nation. They also have a vested interest in covering up all the wrong doings of the dynasty.

Following Nehru's footsteps, you find a strange spectacle of people—whether young or old, and whether in a political position or a bureaucratic position or a position in a sports body—not wanting to ever quit. Where extension is not possible, bureaucrats would seek some position or the other post retirement.

Contrast the above with George Washington, co-founder of the USA. He was proclaimed the “Father of the Country” and was elected the first president of USA in 1789 with virtually no opposition. Washington retired in 1797, firmly declining to serve for more than eight years—two terms—despite requests to continue. His tremendous role in creating and running America notwithstanding, he didn't harbour or propagate self-serving notions of indispensability.

The 22nd amendment to the US constitution setting a maximum of only two terms for the president came only in 1947. Prior to that it was only an observed good practice for over a century.

Thomas Jefferson, the 3rd President and one of the founding fathers of the US, famous for his many achievements and for having originally drafted the Declaration of Independence of the US in 1776, was also requested, pressurised and persuaded to consider continuing as President after completion of two terms in 1808, on account of his excellent performance on multiple counts—during his tenure the geographical area of the USA almost doubled, upon purchase of Louisiana from the French, which in turn ended the dispute about the navigation of the Mississippi.

However, stressing the democratic and republican ideals, Jefferson refused, even though there was no legal bar then, and people would have loved him to continue.

Blunder-97 :
Not Appointing a Successor, Deliberately

Nehru did not appoint a senior cabinet minister or a deputy prime minister (after Patel) to function in his absence when he went abroad. A responsible prime minister would have done so, and would have scotched all speculations on “After Nehru, who?” But he deliberately did not do so both to show to the world how indispensable and irreplaceable he was, and to make way for his daughter. Nehru thus sacrificed national interests for personal dynastic interests.

Nehru's mentor, Gandhi, took care to appoint him as PM, and never promoted his own progeny. Nehru, despite having ruled too long, did not think it fit to pass the baton to anyone, even though it was not as if the country was doing great during his time, and his not being there would have adversely affected the nation. On the contrary, with him not there, things might have improved!

Writes Perry Anderson, Professor of History and Sociology at UCLA: “For the rest of the union, the lasting affliction of Nehru’s rule has been the dynastic system he left it. He claimed to reject any dynastic principle, and his capacity for self-deception was perhaps great enough for him to believe he was doing so. But his refusal to indicate any colleague as a successor, and complaisance in the elevation of his daughter—with no qualifications other than her birth for the post—to the presidency of Congress, where Gandhi had once placed him for his own trampoline to power, speak for themselves.”

Wrote Walter Crocker in ‘Nehru: A Contemporary’s Estimate’: “It is no less strange that Nehru clung to office for so long. It would have been of help to the cause of parliamentary democracy in India if he had stood down...This is what Kemal Ataturk did...For one thing his long domination sapped the opposition; the opposition is an essential part of parliamentary democracy...”

Even More Blunders

Blunder-A.1 :

Squandering Once-in-a-lifetime Opportunity

What really pains one is that it was after hundreds of years that India breathed free, and the Indian people, oppressed for centuries, hoped the sun of swaraj would shine for them, lifting the dark days of the Islamic and then the British tyranny—sadly, the sun failed to rise for the overwhelming majority.

Millions were fired with patriotic zeal, ready to sacrifice, and do their utmost to show to the world what this grand, old civilisation was capable of. They all wanted to disprove the British canard that without them India would go to pieces and would become a basket case. India was far, far richer than England when the English first arrived in India. However, thanks to their loot and disastrous economic management, condition of India became pitiable.

That was the time, after independence, to show to the world what India would have been, had British, and earlier to them, the Muslims, not messed up.

Fortunately for Nehru, support was for the asking. There was no opposition worth the name. He enjoyed unbridled supremacy both over the Congress and the government for 17 long years. He could do what he wanted. People were also fired up. It was once in a millennium opportunity. India would never get such an opportunity again.

Yet, Nehru just frittered away that once in a life time golden opportunity for the nation. He squandered his political capital. Rather than proving the doubters wrong, Nehru proved them right.

Rather than leaving a strong and prosperous India after 17 long years of rule, Nehru left India with the largest unsettled border in the world; too militarily weak to effectively defend itself against foreign designs; too isolated (thanks to the non-aligned policy unaligned to national interests) and too friendless to get help and support in case of foreign aggression; too poor to adequately feed its millions; too socialistic, babu-dominated, and mired in bureaucratic controls to be able to rise and become prosperous; too illiterate and uninformed to derive benefits from the adoption of a democratic system; too weak politically by not allowing the opposition to rise up, and become an effective player in the electoral system and democratic processes; too pliant a press and media to fulfil their duty as the fourth estate; legislative and executive wings too full of sycophants, “yes-men”, and hangers-on at the top-level to deliver anything

concrete—overall an oppressive legacy of political, bureaucratic, economic and academic culture that continued to pull India down for decades after, and still afflicts it.

Rather than building the solid foundations of a rich, prosperous and happy India in the first 17 years of independence, Nehru arrogantly and dictatorially went about building an elitist culture divorced from ground reality, ignorant on “what makes a nation prosperous”, ignoring the adverse results of his faulty policies in most of the fields, not learning from hard experience, and remaining irrational and unscientific (despite posing as a “scientific”-minded person), and laying the foundations of India’s misery, that continue to bedevil India.

India has been paying the price of indulging Nehru during the first 17 years of its independence; and without learning anything from it, then indulging his even more incompetent dynasty!

Blunder-A.2 :
Not Utilising Talent for Nation Building

India, and therefore Nehru as PM, was exceptionally fortunate to have a large pool of extraordinarily talent at the time of independence.

To have had highly capable and upright politicians like Sardar Patel, C Rajagopalachari, Dr BR Ambedkar, Dr Rajendra Prasad, John Mathai, CD Deshmukh, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, KM Munshi, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, and so on, was indeed fortunate. Then, there was a large team of experienced and capable bureaucrats like VP Menon, HM Patel, Girija Shankar Bajpai, etc. Many of the Diwans of the Princely States were highly competent and experienced administrators, like CP Ramaswami Iyer of Travancore, M Visvesvaraya of Mysore.

Indian army had WW-II veterans, and people like KM Cariappa and others who had again shown their mettle in the Kashmir war. We also had many reputed educationists, technocrats, economists, and finance persons.

In short, at the time of independence, India was fortunate to have trained, experienced and competent persons in most fields. India would never have such a mix of talent and such people of integrity again.

Sadly, Nehru utterly failed to leverage such rich assets and resources. Why? He had a defective grasp on vital matters. He was not a team builder. He was indecisive, and a bad administrator, organiser, and executioner.

Although arrogant, egotist, and full of hubris, he perhaps suffered internally from an inferiority complex making him oppose or slight people more talented than him, and get rid of them, like, for example, Ambedkar. Nehru preferred lackeys, and yes-men.

Blunder-A.3 : **Not Leveraging the Strong Base & Assets**

At the time of independence, compared to China and all the countries in SE-Asia like Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and so on, India was much better placed in terms of infra-structure like roads, railways, and industries; administrative and criminal-justice infra-structure; and had a large, indigenous groups of entrepreneurs, industrialists and businessmen.

Nehru woefully failed to leverage those assets to grow fast, increase employment, remove poverty, and get prosperous. Even as countries much behind us at the time of our independence picked up, grew fast, and became first-world countries within a few decades, India lumbered on as a forever developing, third-world country under Nehru and his dynasty. Why? Rather than encouraging and promoting free economy and free markets for which the base (superior to the SE-Asian countries) already existed, Nehru went about shackling private businesses, and promoting the lethargic, babu-run state-enterprises that soon became money-sinks.

By 1954, Nehru made Parliament accept as the aim of economic development the “socialist pattern of society”. Socialism was enshrined in 1955 as the official policy of the Congress at its Avadi session. The 1956 version of the Industrial Policy Resolution made the state even more dominant—it allowed new ventures in textiles, automobiles and defence only to the state, and vested exclusive controls to it over many other sectors. All these inaugurated an era of stifling private enterprise, grievously hurting industrialisation and development, severely limiting employment opportunities, plunging the country in chronic poverty, and promoting debilitating babudom and endemic corruption.

Democratic and liberal Nehru was able to manage dissent so effectively, through various subtle means, that whether it was the press or the opposition or even the opponents within the Congress, he was able to carry through his policies—that ultimately proved disastrous. The voices of dissent were muffled through various covert and overt methods, using carrot and stick. The initial opponents of socialism ended up defending nationalisation in order to remain in his good books.

Many industries were barred for the private sector. When entrepreneurs in the countries in Southeast Asia, like South Korea, were being encouraged to expand and set up industries and their government was offering them cheap credit, here in India we were doing the opposite: GD Birla was refused a license for setting

up a steel plant; scores of business proposals of Tatas were rejected; Aditya Birla, looking to the hostile business environment in India, chose to set up industries outside India;...the list is endless. Krishna Menon [the right-hand man of Nehru] had reportedly snubbed offers of the Japanese corporate representatives for collaboration saying it was out of question on account of the vast differences in the policies of the two countries.

Given license-permit-quota-raj, reluctance to give licenses to the so-called “monopolies”, anti-business policies and extortionist taxes, industrialisation had to suffer. Industrialisation and industries were sought to be controlled and managed by Nehru’s IAS babus who knew next to nothing on how to run an industry. Nehru and the socialists had very simplistic notions on wealth creation: Nehru thought that all it took to have economic prosperity was to invest in industrialisation, especially in heavy industries, and to put babus in charge. Market, competition, entrepreneurship, quality, top-line, bottom-line—those funny words existed in the English dictionary in total contempt of the Nehruvians. No entrepreneurship was required. Sarkar was the entrepreneur. It would decide what to produce, what not to produce, and how much to produce, and at what rate to sell—the market itself would be controlled by Sarkar.

Nehru and the socialists never understood what it really took to create wealth and banish poverty, and persisted with their sterile, copycat methods.

Blunder-A.4 :
Did Nehru Covertly Intend Letting J&K Go?

Nehru can be squarely and unhesitatingly blamed for the creation of the J&K problem, and the creation of the PoK. However, those problems did not arise on account of just one or two unfortunate decisions of Nehru. There was enough scope to correct or reverse those initial one, two, or three wrong decisions.

For example, when he made announcement of 'UN-overseen plebiscite in J&K' for the first time in his AIR broadcast on 28 October 1947, at the instance of the British Mountbatten, many senior and wiser Indians, including Sardar Patel and Dr BR Ambedkar, opposed it. Nehru could have reversed his statement, or attached impossible-to-fulfil conditions to it. But, ignoring all wise counsel, he remained faithful to Mountbatten, and reiterated his unwise stand again on 2 November 1947.

Even then the actual deed had not been done, as the matter had NOT actually been referred to the UN. Sardar Patel and other cabinet colleagues again advised him otherwise, but he went ahead at the prodding of Mountbatten and actually referred the matter to the UN on 1 January 1948. Why that persistence with a wrong position?

The galling, surprising, and inexplicable aspect is that Nehru did not make just one or two or three errors or wrong decisions, but he made a series of 23 major blunders on the J&K issue, many of whom are covered under 'Blunder-10' to 'Blunder-22' earlier.

The question therefore arises: Was Gandhi's chosen protégé for the most critical post at the most critical time when India breathed freedom after over a millennium was so dumb or incompetent as to commit those one-after-the-other 23 major errors on J&K?

Or, was there a covert design behind them?

Could it be that Nehru didn't really care if J&K didn't become part of India?

Could it be that guided by Mountbatten, he didn't mind if J&K or PoK became part of Pakistan by default?

Could it be that since Nehru as PM could not have overtly supported J&K or PoK going to Pakistan, he covertly tried to manipulate it in that direction?

Because, it is hard to believe Nehru could have made so many blunders on J&K without wanting to do so. A person who was clever enough to grab the Presidentship of the Congress in 1946, and hence the first PM-ship of India, so

blatantly, illegally, and undemocratically when not a single PCC had voted for him could not have suddenly become so dumb as to commit blunder after blunder on Kashmir!

Blunder-A.5 : **Nehru & Casteism**

It is all very well to fulminate publicly against casteism and communalism—it shows you up as modern and liberal. But, what really matters is what you really do in practice to eradicate casteism. With India basking in the glow of freedom, and all charged up, it was a golden opportunity after independence to finally nail casteism. But, did Nehru do so? Sadly, caste of candidates for election in a given constituency was a very important, rather crucial, consideration for their selection. Rather than weakening the foundations of casteism, Nehruvian electoral strategy strengthened it. The sad spectacle that we see today is thanks to the seeds sown since the first general elections of 1952.

The lists of proposed candidates prepared for the consideration of the Congress State and Central Election Committees had an important column on caste of each candidate! This was so even when Nehru was ex-officio member of the Central Election Committee.

One finds many Kashmiri Pandits in Nehru's top circle. Why? Caste loyalty? Incidentally, it is odd why Nehru, who considered himself modern, westernised, forward-looking, secular and above caste, allowed himself to be called *Panditji*?

There is an interesting episode of Nehru's time which illustrates how the upper caste Indian leaders paid mere lip service to the amelioration of the lot of dalits, and how insensitive they were to their pathetic condition: In a Scheduled Caste Conference held in Lucknow, presided by the dalit leader Babu Jagjivan Ram, Nehru in his inaugural address said, among other things, that those who do the menial job of carrying excreta were greater than God. At this, Babu Jagjivan Ram got up immediately and snapped back that having done the said job for ages, the Dalits had already become Gods, and the castes to which Nehru and Gandhi belong should now take up the said task and become Gods!

Blunder-A.6 :
Nehru & Uniform Civil Code (UCC)

Article 44 of the Directive Principles of State Policy in India sets implementation of the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) as a duty of the State. UCC is meant to replace the personal laws based on the scriptures and customs of various religious communities in India with a common law governing every citizen. These laws cover marriage, divorce, inheritance, adoption and maintenance. The concept of Directive Principles of State Policy was borrowed from the Irish Constitution, and inspired by the Declaration of the Rights of Man proclaimed by Revolutionary France, the Declaration of Independence by the American Colonies, and the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the spirit of the Directive Principles of State Policy while the Hindu Code Bills were passed during 1950s, nothing was done to amend the Muslim Personal Laws, despite many prominent Muslims advocating it (with Mullahs and some Muslim bodies expectedly opposing it), including Mahommedali Currim Chagla (MC Chagla), an Indian jurist, diplomat, Cabinet Minister, and the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court from 1948 to 1958, who had made a vehement plea in favour of UCC.

Why? For Nehru, power was sacrosanct. Power required getting elected. And, that required votes. Why disturb the apple-cart? If introducing UCC may cost Muslim votes, why do it? To hell with the rights and freedom of Muslim women! Let them continue to suffer. Nehru didn't mind "good things" as long as it didn't cost him votes.

Islamic and Muslim-majority countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, etc. have since reformed their personal laws and banned or restricted triple-talaq, but NOT the "secular" India. Even during the Nehruvian times, President Ayub Khan of Pakistan and President Habib of Tunisia had changed the Muslim Personal Law in their respective countries.

Incidentally the Goa state has uniform civil code regardless of religion, gender, and caste—Hindu, Muslim and Christians in Goa are all bound with the same law related to marriage, divorce and succession. If there can be a UCC in one state in India, why not in others, especially when it would benefit women.

It is worth noting that in October 2015, the Supreme Court of India again asserted the need of a Uniform Civil Code.

Nehru has unfortunately laid such traditions and foundations that most issues

have become complicated and difficult to resolve, like the Kashmir conundrum, the India-China border issues, junking the socialistic claptrap, implementing the UCC, and so on.

To cover-up for his vote-bank politics, Nehru tried to take the expedient plea in the garb of being a “liberal” and a “secular” that a Hindu-majority nation like India would not like to touch the personal laws of the minority, unless the minority itself wants it. The question is: Did Mullahs represent the Muslims? Did Nehru ascertain the wishes of the Muslim women? If Nehru was genuinely a liberal and a secular person, he would rather have said: “We would formulate UCC by involving all concerned. We would educate all Indians on the benefits of UCC. We would educate the Muslims on the reforms that have taken place in Islamic countries. We would encourage wide-ranging discussions. After that, we would ascertain the wishes of each gender in each religious community, including Muslims, through a secret ballot.”

Blunder-A.7 : **Nehru, the Dictator**

Nehru leveraged the democratic process to gain and retain power, but temperamentally, he was more a dictator than a democrat. He filled the top party posts and the cabinet with “yes-men” so that he could exercise unhindered power, and freely interfere in the workings of the party and ministries not under his direct charge.

Calling Nehru, for the first time, ‘the Congress dictator’, C.R.[Rajaji] also said: ‘The single-brain activity of the people who meet in Congress is to find out what is in Jawaharlal’s mind and to anticipate it. The slightest attempt at dissent meets with stern disapproval and is nipped in the bud.’

– Rajmohan Gandhi, ‘Rajaji: A Life’

Within months of his tenure as India’s first PM, he began acting whimsically and dictatorially without consulting the cabinet and the senior colleagues leading to the well-known rift with Sardar Patel. Patriotic and democratic Sardar Patel was forced to question Nehru’s methods leading even to Sardar’s resignation in December 1947. The exchange of letters among Nehru, Sardar Patel and Gandhi between November-1947 and January-1948 clearly bring forth the issues of Nehru’s dictatorial working. Sadly, Gandhi failed to correct Nehru prior to his assassination on 30 January 1948.

Even Acharya Kriplani resigned from the presidency of the Congress in November 1947 protesting timidity of India against Pakistan, its mishandling of the Kashmir issue, and demanding revocation of the standstill agreement signed with the Nizam of Hyderabad.

Among the many disastrous results of Nehru’s dictatorial working was his series of decision (that were really major blunders) on Kashmir, without taking his cabinet into confidence.

Once the stalwarts like Gandhi and Sardar Patel were no more, Nehru had a free, unbridled play! One can indulge the wise, rational, enlightened, and benevolent semi-dictatorship of people like Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore who within two decades took Singapore from a third-world country to a top first-world country; but can one indulge the blunders-after-blunders of a democratically-elected dictator like Nehru whose unwise decisions only caused misery to India and its people.

This is what Dr Ambedkar had to say in his resignation letter (from the

Nehru's cabinet) of 27 September 1951: "...The Cabinet has become a merely recording and registration office of decisions already arrived at by Committees. As I have said, the Cabinet now works by Committees... All important matters relating to Defence are disposed of by the Defence Committee. The same members of the Cabinet are appointed by them. I am not a member of either of these Committees. They work behind an iron curtain. Others who are not members have only to take joint responsibility without any opportunity of taking part in the shaping of policy..."

John Mathai, India's Finance Minister between 1949 and 1951 soon discovered Nehru's "feet of clay" and remarked: "...Under Nehru the Cabinet had never functioned, and all decisions were taken privately by the Prime Minister and the individual Minister concerned. Even when a decision was endorsed in the Cabinet, the Prime Minister went back on it and reversed the decision... The only time when the Indian Cabinet really functioned was ... when Sardar Patel was acting as Prime Minister. For the first time the cabinet functioned with joint responsibility; and the acting Prime Minister conducted meetings as the British Prime Minister would have."

Wrote KM Munshi: "Jawaharlal was a dictator by temperament but had an intellectual aversion to dictators like Hitler and Stalin. He swore by the Constitution but was ever ready to defy or ignore it. Entrenched as he was in unlimited powers, he could never realise the harm that he was doing to the country by twisting the Constitution to his liking."

Blunder-A.8 :
Nehru: Power Trumps Principles

Despite being already in the powerful position of a PM, Nehru manoeuvred to also become the Congress Party President in 1951, and retained that presidentship till 1954 to ensure a vice-like grip for himself both on the government and the party machinery.

Nehru released his presidency in 1955 to his lackey and a nobody like UN Dhebar, and allowed him to continue in that post right till 1959, after which he again manoeuvred to get his daughter Indira Gandhi elected as the party president in 1959.

Ironically, while he himself simultaneously held the post of the Party President and the PM, he got a similar setup banned at the state level—he got a party resolution passed in 1953 forbidding the state CMs from simultaneously holding a post in the PCC (Pradesh Congress Committee), on the ground that the CMs have too much office work to be able to devote time for the party work (Didn't a PM have as much work? Height of hypocrisy!). Why? He didn't want the state CMs to get powerful, and ever challenge him, or his daughter later.

Nehru's god was power. Principles were fine to enhance one's image, but if they came in the way of power for himself, and after him, for his dynasty, Nehru unhesitatingly and unscrupulously chose power.

Nehru ranted on secularism and against communalism and casteism, but when it came to selection of candidates for elections, both religion and caste were critical considerations for him, and for the Congress subservient to him. He never attempted to loosen the hold of religion and caste on the electoral process, he rather deftly leveraged it.

He didn't feel responsible as the first PM of India to nurture a strong opposition so as to strengthen the democratic polity in India. Instead, he tried all he could to starve the opposition of funds and publicity, and to defame and condemn it.

He didn't try to put in place standard democratic processes to run the government, and to arrive at sound, consensual decisions. Instead, he tried to run roughshod over the cabinet, and freely interfered in other ministries. What mattered to him was dictatorial power for himself.

Rather than building up a competent, strong leadership in the government and the Congress Party, like his mentor Gandhi had done, Nehru side-lined the competent like Ambedkar, Sardar and others, and gave a fillip only to yes-men

and sycophants. Why? So that his power remained unchallenged.

Not only that, he gradually sidelined even the future competitors to his daughter Indira through the Kamaraj Plan of 1963, and other means, to ensure continuance of power for his dynasty. If someone should have first exited the government under the 1963 Kamaraj Plan it should have been Nehru himself for his 1962 India-China war debacle (please see *Blunders* listed earlier), and for his utter failures in all other spheres.

Nehru ranted against capitalists, but if they obliged his party by filling-in its election war-chest for a quid pro quo, Nehru's "principles" never came in the way.

Socialism was not merely a fad for Nehru. What appealed to Nehru and his dynasty in socialism was its vote-gathering and power-grabbing potential by its appeal to the poor and the powerless. Ranting against the capitalists and the rich, and posing to be with the poor and the deprived in the name of socialism appealed to the masses. That India was practically going to dogs (and the masses remained miserably poor, and were starving) before their very eyes thanks to their socialistic policies didn't seem to pinch them, for the socialistic nonsense managed to pull them into power elections after elections. What mattered was power, not the poor! Nehru talked of land-reforms, but when his party people informed him it could cost votes, he slowed down the process.

Blunder-A.9 :
Ill-treatment of Tandon & Sanjiva Reddy

The “great democrat” Nehru, who had most undemocratically become the first PM (please see Blunder-6), manoeuvred for a complete domination over the party in 1950, just before Patel’s demise, by having a Congress President of his choice elected.

Nehru unilaterally declared the socialist JB Kriplani as the candidate. Patel gave full support to Purushottam Das Tandon for the presidentship. Nehru, the pseudo-secular, had his objections to the selection of Tandon. The objections didn’t really make sense, like Tandon attending a Refugees’ Conference, and so on. Nehru threatened to resign if Tandon was elected President. Despite the threat, Tandon won with 1306 votes against Kriplani’s 1092. Nehru, the power-hungry person, of course, didn’t resign. On the next day of the election results, when Rajaji came to meet Patel, Patel asked him jocularly: “Have you brought Jawaharlal’s resignation?”

However, soon after Patel’s death Nehru began his manoeuvrings to get Tandon out. Tandon was a highly principled man of very simple living, but high thinking. Not being Nehru’s lackey, Nehru wanted him out. In 1951, Nehru threatened to withdraw from the CWC unless it was reconstituted as per his wishes—an improper demand considering it was the Congress President’s prerogative.

Nehru was apparently copying the illegal act of his mentor Gandhi of the late 1930s when a similar demand on the then Congress President Netaji Subhas was made to nominate members of the CWC as per the wishes of Gandhi, when Gandhi was not even a primary member of the Congress!

Tandon tried to resist Nehru’s moves, but given the immense pressure brought upon him by other quarters at the instance of Nehru, he finally succumbed, and resigned. Nehru promptly took over as the President of the Congress, in addition to being the PM.

Nehru loyalist Sanjiva Reddy became the Congress President after Indira Gandhi, and remained in that post during 1960–63. He later complained that he was treated “as Mrs Gandhi’s chaprasi [peon]”. Nehru sought not only his own dominance, but also his dynasty’s dominance!

Blunder-A.10 : **Anti Armed-Forces**

It may sound odd, but Nehru & Co were so obsessed about continuing in power, and so unnecessarily and irrationally concerned of the possibility of the army coup, that they went to insane level of check-mating that possibility—even to the extent of harming the Indian defences, Indian external security, and the morale of the Army.

Rather than recognising the tremendous contribution of the Indian Armed Forces in the First and the Second World War, and giving them pride of place, the political class and the bureaucratic class, through the Ministry of Defence, conspired to downgrade the position of the Military top brass, by instituting various changes in the pecking order, reporting channels, and the constitution of the committees. Changes were done where the bureaucrats began to be ranked higher than the senior military officers.

For example, the post of Commander-in-Chief, the main advisor on military matters, was abolished. That role was given to the President of India—the President became formally the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces! The real motive was to remove the possibility of the Army Commander-in-Chief ever challenging the civilian authority. When you had adopted the complete British political system, bureaucratic system and the army system lock, stock, and barrel, and when there had been no occasion in the pre-independence period either in India or Britain when the Commander-in-Chief had booted out the civilian authority, why that uncalled for concern?

The place next in stateliness and grandeur to the Viceroy palace was the residence of the British Commander-in-Chief, then called Flagstaff House. That house should have been allocated to Field Marshal KM Cariappa. But, Nehru, leaving his spacious York Road residence, promptly allocated it to himself—such were the Gandhian values of simplicity imbibed by him. Flagstaff House was later renamed as *Teen Murti Bhavan*.

With respect to the top IAS babus, the three Service Chiefs have been downgraded. They interact with the IAS babu as Defence Secretary who is the interface between the Armed Forces and the Union Cabinet.

Matters related to Defence Production and Defence Purchases also came principally under the bureaucrats in the Defence Ministry (though army men were represented in committees) opening a major avenue for the babus and the politicians to make money.

Worst was keeping the military weak, lest they ever challenge the civilian authority. Military remained grossly under-funded. It continued with the obsolete Second World War equipments, unable to adequately defend the country against Pakistan and China. Nehru assured the military there was no threat from China, so why bother to spend on army. Nehru's self-deluding, pet theory was: No country would attack India! His was a military strategy founded on wishful thinking. Nehru had no use of wisdom like what Field Marshall Roberts had said: "The art of war teaches us to rely not on the likelihood of the enemy not coming, but on our own readiness to receive him; not on the chance of his not attacking, but rather on the fact that we have made our position unassailable."

For a relatively minor operation against the Portuguese in Goa in 1961, "one battalion was short of 400 pair of footwear and went into the battle in PT shoes," as narrated by General BM Kaul.

During the Nehruvian times the Defence Ministry had very low importance. Senior ministers shunned it, as it was considered not an important enough portfolio for a senior person!

Such was the Nehruvian hubris that side-lining the military-seniors, even purely military matters tended to be decided by Nehru, Krishna Menon, other politicians, and bureaucrats. For example, the hare-brained "Forward Policy" (please see Blunder-29), which was actually a "bluff" masquerading as a military strategy, that led to the 1962 India-China war, was the brain-child of Nehru

Nehru, and his Defence Minister Krishna Menon ill-treated army top brass. To give one example:

Major-General Thimayya's daring feat in Kashmir was unforgettable. He took his tanks to a height of about 12000 feet on the snow-capped Zojila Pass—something unique in history, as nobody had taken tanks to such heights and in such hazardous conditions before—and routed the enemy, destroying all their bunkers. Sadly, it was this brave and competent Thimayya who was humiliated by Krishna Menon, when he was Defence Minister in Nehru's cabinet, forcing Thimayya to resign! Later, after Thimayya withdrew his resignation at the instance of Nehru, even Nehru behaved with him in a way that amounted to his double humiliation!! Shocked by Nehru's behaviour, President Dr Rajendra Prasad had remonstrated with him for laying down bad precedents.

Nehruvian tradition has been faithfully followed by the Dynasty and even by the Opposition. While the corrupt IAS and IPS babus have gradually cornered fantastic perks and facilities, all kinds of roadblocks were put up by the babus

and netas in implementing OROP for the Armed Forces!

Blunder-A.11 : **Giving Away 55 Crores to Pakistan**

India and Pakistan had agreed in November 1947 that Rupees 55 crores remained to be transferred to Pakistan, as its share of the assets of undivided India.

However, at the insistence of Patel, India informed Pakistan, within two hours of the agreement, that the actual implementation of the agreement would hinge on a settlement on Kashmir. Said Patel: “In the division of assets we treated Pakistan generously. But we cannot tolerate even a pie being spent for making bullets to be shot at us. The settlement of assets is like a consent decree. The decree will be executed when all the outstanding points are satisfactorily settled.”

Pakistan had been pressing India for rupees 55 crores. In the Cabinet meeting in January 1948 Patel stated that the money if given would surely be used by Pakistan to arm itself for use in Kashmir, hence the payment should be delayed. Dr Shyama Prasad Mookerjee, NV Gadgil and Dr BR Ambedkar backed Patel. Nehru too expressed his total agreement. The Cabinet therefore decided to withhold the money. Patel told in a Press Conference on 12 January 1948 that the issue of 55 crores could not be dissociated from the other related issues.

Gandhi conveyed to Patel the next day (13 January 1948) that withholding 55 crores from Pakistan was what Mountbatten had opined to him as “a dishonourable act... unstatesman-like and unwise”, and what he [Gandhi] thought was immoral. Gandhi was apparently innocent of the fact that Mountbatten and the British were bent upon favouring Pakistan—even on Kashmir, despite their aggression. How could a top leader be so blind to the realities?

Patel was furious and asked of Mountbatten: “How can you as a constitutional Governor-General do this behind my back? Do you know the facts?...”

Unfortunately, *Nehru*, rather than supporting Patel, and sticking to what he had himself fully agreed to, and had got passed in the Cabinet, *went back on his commitment*, and commented to Gandhi: “Yes, it was passed but we don’t have a case. It is legal quibbling.”

Sissies like Gandhi and Nehru, rather than being prudent about what was in the best interest of the nation, went by what the British colonial representative Mountbatten, having his own axe to grind, had to say, and the Cabinet decision was reversed to let Pakistan have the money, and trouble India further in J&K!

Going by the net results, effectively, it appears that for Gandhi maintaining “Brand Mahatma”, and its associated “morality”, was more important than the national interests.

Why didn’t Gandhi and Mountbatten consider the immorality of Pakistan in attacking Kashmir which had already acceded to India? If Pakistan had agreed to desist from its illegal action in Kashmir, it would have got the money anyway. Further, Gandhi wanted to look good in the eyes of the Muslims in Pakistan and India. Sell national interest for the sake of appeasement, and your own image. And for Nehru, kowtowing to Mountbatten and Gandhi was a priority, rather than standing up for the Cabinet decision, of which he was a part. People like Sardar Patel were out of place in such a scenario.

Gandhi went on a fast to force the issue in his favour. This time the fast was not against the British, it was against Patel (who was doing his duty in the national interest), and effectively against the interest of India. It drove a wedge between Gandhi and Patel; and also between Patel and Nehru, because Nehru had backed out from a joint cabinet decision.

Nehru wimpishly back-tracked on the cabinet decision, Patel was forced to yield, Gandhi won, and India lost.

Blunder-A.12 :
Nehru, Gandhi & Others in British Jails

The conditions of Indian prisoners in jails was terrible: their uniforms were not washed for several days; rats and cockroaches roamed their kitchen area; reading and writing materials were not provided to them. That was in sharp contrast to the British prisoners, and the top Gandhians, who were treated very well in jails. Additionally, being political prisoners, they expected to be treated like one, rather than as common criminals. They demanded equality with the jailed Europeans in food standards, clothing, toiletries, and other hygienic necessities, as well as access to books and a daily newspapers. They also protested against their subjection to forced manual labour. To force the issue, Bhagat Singh and colleagues, including Jatin Das, began hunger strike. The strike gained wide popularity across the nation, with the media popularising it.

The condition of the revolutionary Jatindra Nath Das (Jatin Das), who was arrested on 14 June 1929 under the Supplementary Second Lahore Conspiracy Case deteriorated and became critical. Jail authorities recommended unconditional release, but the government refused. He was martyred on 13 September 1929 in Lahore jail after a 63-day hunger strike.

Durga Bhabhi (Durgawati Devi, a revolutionary, and wife of another revolutionary Bhagwati Charan Vohra) led his funeral procession from Lahore to Calcutta by train, with thousands thronging the railway stations on the way to pay homage to Jatin. His funeral procession in Kolkata was about two-mile long.

While everyone paid rich tributes to Jatin Das for his exemplary sacrifice for a common cause through his hunger-strike, conspicuously, the serial hunger-striker Gandhi, who one would have thought would surely write glowingly about it, chose to keep silent; and in subtle ways, tried to look down upon his noble act, as would be clear from his following letters:

Gandhi's letter of 22 September 1929 to Mahadev Desai: "...As yet I cannot write anything about Jatin. I am not surprised that what may be called our own circle fails to understand me. Personally, I have not the least doubt regarding the correctness of my view. *I see no good in this agitation.* I have been obliged to keep silent because what I would say might be misused..."

Gandhi's letter of 9 October 1929 to Raihana Tyabji: "...Now about Jatin Das. I have been deliberately silent because *I have not approved of the fast.* But I have refrained from saying anything as my opinion would have been distorted by the officials and grossly misused..."

Gandhi's letter of 18 October 1929 to Rajaji: "...I am wholly against hunger-strikes for matters such as Wizia and Jatin died for. Any expression of such opinion would be distorted and misused by the Government. I therefore feel that my silence is more serviceable than my criticism. Do you not agree with my judgment of the hunger-strikes and with my consequent silence?..."

Did Gandhi feel jealous? 63 days of fast by Jatin! In comparison, Gandhi longest fast was for only 21 days—one-third that of Jatin's. Also, anyone other than Gandhi running away with credit for a hunger-strike for a good cause, that Gandhi felt was his patent and copyright, deserved to be faulted on manufactured pretexts like "not moral", or "not the right cause"! Morally right, or the right causes were like Gandhi coercing Dr Ambedkar into the Poona Pact through his fast unto death!!

Talking of suffering and sacrifices, many were tortured and whipped in British jails—but, never the top Gandhian Congress leaders. Nehru himself describes in his book of severe whipping of other imprisoned freedom-fighters in jails. For most Gandhiites, especially the top ones, the jails were, relatively speaking, comfortable.

While ruthlessly persecuting the other freedom fighters, the British kid gloved Gandhi & Co, and incarcerated them under comfortable conditions. When arrested in 1930, the British took due care to provide all provisions for the health and comfort of Gandhi.

On the other hand, like Tilak, even Bose was incarcerated at Mandalay jail. Both had developed serious health complications in jail. Revolutionaries (like Veer Savarkar, Sanyal, and many others) were inhumanly treated in jails like the Cellular in Andaman, where several lost their sanity, or committed suicide. People like Bose and Lala Lajpat Rai received lathi blows, specifically targeted at them, and were manhandled in jails, but not the top Gandhian leaders.

That their (top Gandhians) life in jail was not all that terrible can be inferred from an episode in Ahmednagar prison described by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in his autobiography 'India Wins Freedom'. The episode was something like this: Upon their remonstrance with the jailor for serving them food on iron plates, the jailer had apologised and had the plates replaced by China plates and dinner set. As the cook in the jail could not prepare food to their taste, a better cook was soon appointed.

Writes Rajmohan Gandhi in 'Patel: A Life': "On the day of their arrival [in jail], Kripalani recalls Azad showing 'towering rage': he threw out the Jailor

who had brought ready-to-drink tea for them in an aluminium kettle along with loaves of bread on an aluminium plate and glasses for the tea. The Congress President 'ordered' the jailor to bring tea in a pot, milk in a jug and sugar in a bowl, plus cups, saucers and spoons. The jailor, an Indian, complied. According to Pattabhi, he was 'bravely performing his duties with visible regard for his new guests and with unshakeable loyalty to his old masters'."

All the rooms in Ahmednagar Fort jail where Patel, Nehru, Azad, and others top Congress leaders were lodged had fans and furniture, and were provided with mosquito nets. Dining room, kitchen, baths and toilets were on a side row. They also had a doctor on call.

The routine of the leaders in Ahmednagar jail used to be generally: breakfast at 7am, lunch at 1pm, bridge from 1pm to 3pm, rest from 3pm to 5pm followed by tea (alternately, writing or reading work between lunch and tea), games from 6pm to 7pm, dinner from 7pm to 8.30pm followed by coffee, then retire.

Gandhi was "imprisoned" between 1942 and 1944 in the grand Aga Khan Palace in Pune.

This is not to say that jail was fun place. It must have been a very dull and tedious and an oppressive place, where you are cut off from the world. And to be in jail for such long periods must have got on to their nerves. However, at least, they were relatively better placed compared to non-Gandhiite freedom-fighters, and lower-level Gandhiites, who were ill-fed, and ill-treated.

Nehru had access to newspapers, magazines and books in Naini and other jails. He also had ample supply of reading and writing materials. He wrote *Glimpses of World History* in Naini jail between 1930 and 1933; *An Autobiography* during 1934-35 in Bareilly and Dehra Dun jails; *Discovery of India* between 1942 and 1945 in Ahmednagar Jail.

It is said that Sir Harcourt Butler, the then Governor of UP, had even sent quality food and a champagne bottle to Motilal Nehru in his prison, out of consideration for their association. They did not show similar indulgence to others. Even Subhas Chandra Bose, who was a non-Gandhiite, was ill-treated in prison, which severely affected his health.

Writes Nehru in his autobiography: "Personally, I have been very fortunate, and almost invariably, I have received courtesy from my own countrymen and English. Even my gaolers and the policemen, who have arrested me or escorted me as a prisoner from place to place, have been kind to me, and much of the bitterness of conflict and the sting of gaol life has been toned down because of

this human touch...Even for Englishmen I was an individual and not merely one of the mass, and, I imagine, the fact that I had received my education in England, and especially my having been to an English public school, brought me nearer to them. Because of this, they could not help considering me as more or less civilized after their own pattern...”

Contrast this with the fate of thousands of freedom fighters and revolutionaries who really suffered.

But what did the real freedom fighters and revolutionaries get for all their suffering in jails, and for all the genuine sacrifices they made. Post-independence, Nehru mostly ignored them. INA soldiers were denied any recognition, nor were they inducted in the army. Netaji Subhas was forgotten, nor were any efforts made to trace him. But, the top Gandhians, who otherwise had a good time in jails, savoured all the fruits of independence.

Sadly, the top Gandhian leaders like Gandhi, Nehru did nothing to ensure revolutionaries and other freedom fighters got just treatment equivalent to them as freedom fighters. No non-cooperation, no andolan, no civil disobedience, no fast to support them or get them justice. In sharp contrast, Lokmanya Tilak had done all he could to support other freedom fighters, including revolutionaries. This when the revolutionaries had whole-heartedly supported Gandhi's Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-22.

Blunder-A.13 :
Nehru's NWFP Blunder 1946

Congress had won the elections in NWFP, and Dr Khan Sahib (Khan Abdul Jabbar Khan), brother of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, was heading the ministry.

It is worth keeping in mind that in their strategic interests the British had already decided that the North-West India comprising Punjab, Sind, Baluchistan and NWFP (please see Group-B above), along with Kashmir (that bordered either the oil-rich regions to the west, or the communist USSR) must make Pakistan, for which they were working in cahoots with Jinnah, something Jinnah knew well, but a critical factor apparently the “internationalist and foreign-affairs expert” Nehru and other Congress leaders like Gandhi were innocent about!

NWFP was another province the Muslim League was targeting along with Bengal, Assam, Punjab, and Sind. Although the provincial government of NWFP was in the hands of the Congress, the British Governor Olaf Caroe, and the local British civil servants, were rabidly anti-Congress, and pro-Muslim League. Why? They must have been instructed by the HMG to back the Muslim League and ensure NWFP became part of Pakistan. Incidentally, Sir Olaf Caroe was the person who authored “*Wells of Power: The Oilfields of South Western Asia, a Regional and Global Study*”, and persuasively wrote an article on Pakistan’s potential role in the Middle East, and hence Pakistan’s strategic importance for the British. The British were favouring Jinnah in their own interest.

Like elsewhere, the Muslim League, backed by the British, had been looking for and exploiting all opportunities to discredit local Muslim leaders not aligned to the Muslim League, defame them as pro-Hindu and anti-Muslim, and rouse the local Muslim population against the Hindus.

Negligently, the Congress was doing little to counter the Muslim League propaganda, or give a befitting reply to their violence. If the Congress was not doing either of the two, the least it could have done was not to give ready excuses to the Muslim League to indulge in its game. It was in this context that the NWFP Chief Minister, Sardar Patel, and others advised Nehru NOT to go on a visit to NWFP, which he was planning to do as the head of the Interim Government. Ignoring wise counsel, Nehru went. Nehru had the delusion he was very popular—even among Muslims! The results were predictable. The situation went worse for the local Congress Provincial Government, and the Muslim

League gained an upper hand, through communal rumour-mongering, and false, skilful propaganda, backed by the British Governor, and the British officers. The height (or, rather, the low) of the British Governor Olaf Caroe's partisan role was reached when he tried to buy over NWFP Chief Minister Dr Khan Sahib by assuring him that he would help him and his cabinet colleagues continue as ministers in Pakistan if they severed their connection with the "Hindu Congress"!

Nehru was indeed, as someone has remarked, a "*Nabob of Cluelessness*". His blunder after blunder lead one to conclude he had no clue on what should or should not be done in given circumstances. He not only had a deficit and defective grasp on critical matters, he had a faulty world-view on many aspects of vital importance, and lacked the analytical skill and wisdom to reach the right conclusion. Jinnah gleefully looked upon Nehru's visit as godsent, and managed to paint Nehru and the Congress as unpopular among the Muslims of NWFP.

Blunder-A.14 :
Opposition to Restoration of Somnath Temple

(On Somnath, please also read in this book ‘Blunder-69: Distortion of History by Nehru’.)

As its name suggests, Junagadh is the place of an old fort. It is a historical place located at the foot of the Girnar hills in Gujarat. The Junagadh State came under the paramountcy of the East India Company in 1818. The last Nawab of Junagadh, Sir Mahabatkhan Rasulkhanji (or Nawab Mahatab Khan III), was a descendant of Sherkhan Babi. He was an eccentric whose chief preoccupation was dogs: he owned hundreds. (Remember Parveen Babi, the actress? She was related to the Babi dynasty.) The area of Junagadh state was about 3,337 square miles. It was to the south-west of Kathiawar. Its neighbours were all Indian States, and to its south and south-west is the Arabian Sea. Junagadh had no geographical contiguity with Pakistan. Its distance by sea, from Port Veraval to Karachi, is about 300 miles. Out of its population of about 6.7 lacs, 82% were Hindu. The people of the state desired merger with India. Yet, its Nawab went ahead, and signed the *Instrument of Accession* in favour of Pakistan on 15 August 1947. Pakistan had accepted Junagadh’s accession and had also signed the *Standstill Agreement* with them.

Left to Nehru and his mentor Mountbatten, and their soft-peddalling the whole issue, Junagadh as part of Pakistan would have been the fait accompli. However, thanks to wise Sardar Patel that didn’t happen. (For complete details please read author’s book “Foundations of Misery: The Nehruvian Era 1947–64”, available on Amazon.) Sardar planned and executed the Junagadh operation so well that the Nawab of Junagadh fled to Pakistan on 26 October 1947, the Indian army moved in on 9 November 1947, and Sardar Patel arrived to a grand reception in Junagadh on the Diwali day of 13 November 1947.

At the time, Sardar Patel also visited the Somnath Temple (located in the Junagadh State), then in a dilapidated condition, and pledged to reconstruct and restore it to its original glory. Gandhi, when advised by Patel of the commitment, suggested the funds for restoration must come from the public—Patel accepted the advice.

Upon the death of Sardar Patel, the task was taken forward by the cabinet minister KM Munshi. However, Nehru made no bones about his opposition to the project, and made snide remarks, and negative comments. Nehru told Munshi: “I don’t like your trying to restore Somnath. It is Hindu revivalism.”

Cultured and learned Munshi, of course, sent an appropriate and telling reply to Nehru, which included the words: "...It is my faith in the past which has given me the strength to work in the present and to look forward to our future. I cannot value freedom if it deprives us of the Bhagavad Gita or uproots our millions from the faith with which they look upon our temples and thereby destroys the texture of our lives..."

KM Munshi had invited President Dr Rajendra Prasad to attend the inaugural function of the rebuilt Somnath temple in May 1951. Protesting vehemently, Nehru opposed Prasad's attending the ceremony, and wrote to him: "...I confess that I do not like the idea of your associating yourself with a spectacular opening of the Somnath Temple. This is not merely visiting a temple, which can certainly be done by you or anyone else but rather participating in a significant function which unfortunately has a number of implications..."

Implications? Anything Hindu, and it hurt Nehru's absurd, defective, and self-serving sense of secularism. Of course, anything Muslim, Buddhist, or Christian never mattered for him in a similar way.

Dr Rajendra Prasad, of course, attended, and replied: "I would do the same thing [attend inauguration] with a mosque or a church if I were invited... Our State is neither religious nor anti-religious."

Dr Prasad made an excellent speech on the occasion of inauguration, saying among other things, that the physical symbols of our civilisation maybe destroyed, but no arms, army or king could destroy the bond that the people had with their culture and faith. Till that bond remained, the civilisation would survive. He added that it was the creative urge for civilisational renewal, nurtured in the hearts of the people through centuries that had once again led to the praan-pratishta of the Somnath deity. Somnath was the symbol of economic and spiritual prosperity of ancient India, he said. The rebuilding of Somnath will not be complete till India attains the prosperity of the yesteryear...

Such a grand speech! But, at Nehru's instance, Dr Rajendra Prasad's speech was blanked out by the official channels.

Incidentally, what did Nehru think he was? He would command what the President should or should not do? What hubris? A far less capable, and a far less qualified person trying to advise the highly qualified, wise and capable Dr Rajendra Prasad on his conduct!

It is significant that Nehru raised no such tantrums when it came to subsequent restoration of Sanchi or Sarnath, although the same were done through

government funds (while Somnath restoration was through public, and not government, funds). Why? They were Buddhist places! Nehru had problems with only Hindu places!

Epilogue

Having read the summarised blunders above, the readers may justifiably ask: What about the positives? The other side?

A mammoth official, semi-official and unofficial army of sycophantic netas and babus, sarkari historians, Leftist-Marxist academics, and obliging, self-serving media persons have been at the job of eulogising Nehru since independence, and therefore, there is a deluge of material highlighting Nehru's 'greatness'. Why add a few more drops in that ocean? The reader may study those books.

The purpose of this book is to summarise and highlight as many vital and critical aspects of Nehru as possible within the constraints of a short book, that are often swept under the carpet.

You can't do justice to evaluating a person by just talking in general terms like: "He was a great patriot...he sacrificed so much... he ensured unity of India (as if under someone else, India would have got divided) ...he made India a democratic country... he was founder of India's foreign policy... and so on."

Often, when we talk of "greatness" of a political leader in India, it is "greatness by definition", not "greatness evaluated by factual, material achievements"!

For a fair evaluation, you have to adopt a right approach, a proper *set of rules*, the "dos" and the "don'ts":

DOs

Rule-1 (Dos)

When evaluating a national leader, evaluate his or her contribution to the nation on a set of vital parameters, for example, GDP, Per-Capita Income, Relationship with Neighbours, Internal Security Position, External Security Position, Literacy Level, and so on. Determine those set of parameters at the start of the tenure of that leader, and also at the end of his or her tenure. Check the difference.

Rule-2 (Dos)

The above, by itself, is not sufficient. Some progress would anyway be made with the passage of time. The point is whether the progress was as much as it could or should have been. For example, say 5 IITs were opened in 17 years. Could or should they have been 50? Were only 5 out of the possible 50 opened? That has to be evaluated.

For this, also determine a set of developing, but fast-growing countries against whom you would like to benchmark your performance. Evaluate the progress of those countries for the same period. Compare.

DON'Ts

Rule-3 (Don'ts)

Do not mix the personal with the professional or the political. There is little point offsetting poor political performance against good personal traits, and vice versa. If you are evaluating a politician, evaluate political contribution.

Other aspects may be evaluated, but separately, so as not to mix up issues. For example, Gandhi as a person must be evaluated separately from Gandhi as a politician.

Rule-4 (Don'ts)

Greatness has nothing to do with popularity—media can be managed, popularity can be purchased, general public can be manipulated and led up the garden path. Nor has greatness anything to do with winning elections and ruling for a long time.

Hosni Mubarak ruled for 41 years—does that make him great? Gaddafi had been ruling for decades—did that make him great?

The point is, after winning an election, what you did for the people and the country. If you did little, you actually wasted the precious time of the people and the country.

Rule-5 (Don'ts)

Don't go by generalised descriptions or attributes that don't measure the real comparative position on the ground.

For example, statements like, “He was a great democrat, thoroughly secular, highly honest, scientific-minded person who loved children and gave his all to the nation,” or, “He was my hero, he inspired generations, and people loved him,” don't help the purpose of evaluation.

Rule-6 (Don'ts)

Don't go by what the person wrote or spoke or claimed. A person may talk big on lofty ideals and make grand claims, but the real test is what concrete difference he made to the nation and to the lives of the people—that measurement alone is relevant. Did the person walk the talk? Did he really help achieve the goals he talked about?

I may make big claims on being democratic. But, is my actual conduct democratic? Do I respect the opinion of others? Or, do I act dictatorial? Am I above nepotism? Or, do I promote my own? I may talk big against social injustice. But, has it substantially come down during my tenure? Mere talking is not enough.

Unless a leader scores high as per rules 1 and 2, he or she cannot be adjudged as great. This is quite logical. You do not evaluate Sachin Tendulkar's cricket on his personal goodness, you evaluate it on his performance on the field, on the runs scored—not in isolation or as an absolute, but in comparison with others.

On these criteria, one can say that LKY—Lee Kuan Yew—of Singapore was indeed a great leader.

You evaluate Ratan Tata for his business performance by evaluating not Ratan Tata, the person, but the Tata Group—its actual business and financial performance. What was the business and the financial status of the Tata Group when Ratan Tata took over, and what was it when he relinquished control; and how did it compare with the progress made by other business houses. If the performance of the Tata Group is evaluated to be bad, then it is the performance of Ratan Tata which would also be evaluated as bad. You would not try to lessen Ratan Tata's bad performance by either blaming his subordinates or colleagues; or offset the same against his stellar personal qualities.

This is the right approach. You evaluate Ratan Tata or Mukesh Ambani or Narayan Murthy by evaluating the performance of the companies they are heading. If the companies are doing well, you give credit to them. But, rare is a case where a company does badly or goes into bankruptcy, and you still evaluate the person heading it as good and competent.

Strangely, this common sense approach goes for a toss when you try to evaluate a political leader.

Keeping the above rules in mind, and checking the major blunders of the Nehruvian era that we highlighted above, Nehru's 17 year period stretching from August 1947 to May 1964 appears to be an unmitigated disaster! Nehru fails to measure up both as per Rule-1 and Rule-2 of evaluation explained above. Nehru's balance-sheet is therefore in deep red on all the major counts.

Can a country attain greatness even if its leaders are Lilliputs; and vice versa, can the country's leaders be considered great even if the country goes to dogs—or remains wretchedly poor and achieves only a fraction of what it could have?

Unfortunately for the millions of Indians, particularly its poor, Jawaharlal

Nehru, despite his best intentions, ended up as an all-round comprehensive failure, unwittingly laying the foundations of India's misery. Sadly, Nehru's dynasty, rather than retrieving India from the mess, reinforced those blighted foundations.

Very often you find Nehru evaluated as per rules 3 to 6 above, the "don'ts". People—even intellectuals, social commentators, politicians, senior journalists and writers—make generalised statements to eulogise him, even as they show indulgence to his gross failures.

Unfortunately, this led to giving him a stature he didn't deserve. Falsehood is always harmful to the nation. He was so drunk on his own false image that he arrogantly went about with his own "wisdom", ignoring or belittling others, and committed blunders after blunders, with no one to stop him. Ultimately, it harmed the nation.

It didn't stop at that. He was given such a projection, that his descendants found it easy to claim the top-most position without working for it or deserving it. So, those who unjustly praise or eulogise a national leader do a disservice to the nation.

Dreamer & an Idealist?!

Unable to rebut Nehru's faulty handling of many issues like Kashmir, India-China war, economy and so on, his admirers have invented an *innovative alibi*: Nehru was a dreamer and an idealist! "Dreamer" implying he had great vision, and "idealist" implying that he was a man of high principles, lofty moral standards, and impeccably cultured and hence, thanks to the machinations of his unprincipled adversaries, he lost out on certain counts.

Rather than a dreamer or an idealist, Nehru was indeed, as someone has said, a '*Nabob of Cluelessness*'.

One would have highly appreciated Nehru as a dreamer if he had helped millions realise their dreams that they had upon independence. Sadly, the fond dreams of millions turned into nightmares! Was dreaming of a political leader at the top-most responsible position an elitist luxury and an indulgence afforded by the exclusive environs of Lutyen's Delhi!

Talking of "idealism" and "high principles", may one ask what were those high principles that prevented Nehru from finding a negotiated settlement of Indo-China borders?

What was that lofty ideal that allowed Nehru to mutely accept erasure of our peaceful neighbour, Tibet, as a nation? What were those principled compulsions

that drove Nehru to refuse Tibet's repeated pleading to raise its issue in the UN?

What were those high moral standards that forbade Nehru to ensure Sri Lanka treated its Tamil citizens fairly?

What was that idealism that allowed nepotistic promotion by him of his daughter?

Where was the great morality in protecting the corrupt—which he tried for some of his colleagues?

Was it conscionable for him to continue as a prime minister after the debacle in the India-China war?

Why the cultural “finesse” of some of his acts upon the death of Bose, Patel and Rajendra Prasad—highlighted earlier—are inexplicable?

Further, being a dreamer and an idealist may be excellent personal qualities, but when evaluating a person politically and as a leader, the relevant points to evaluate would be if the dreamer-idealist managed to convert those dreams into reality for the masses and whether the nation moved towards some great ideal.

Innovative Counterfactuals!

Unable to eulogise Nehru on the basis of the actual facts, many admirers, on the self-serving assumption that a person other than Nehru would not have been able to do what Nehru did, resort to innovative counterfactuals like: “Had it not been for Nehru India would not have remained united and secular. But for Nehru, there would have been no democracy and the citizens would not have enjoyed freedom...” If facts don't help you, go by presumptions and probabilities!

What if one advanced an alternate counterfactual and argued that an alternate person (like say Sardar Patel or C Rajagopalachari or Dr BR Ambedkar) as prime minister would have made India more united, more secure, more secular and free from communalism, more democratic and much more prosperous, and India would have been well on its way to becoming a first-world nation by 1964!

Conclusion

Nehru's leadership is unique not only in terms of the paucity of achievements, or the large gap between the potential and the actuals, or a very poor show compared to other comparable nations; but in the blunders that he made. Other leaders too make mistakes, but Nehru can beat them all hands down. The number, the extent, and the comprehensiveness of the Nehruvian blunders can't be matched. Comprehensive? Other leaders blunder in one or two or three areas.

Not Nehru. His coverage was comprehensive. He blundered in practically all areas (and sub-areas, and in very many ways): external security, internal security, foreign policy, economy, education, culture,... it's a long list. An examination of his record leaves you gasping. Here is a very cryptic label to capture the essential Nehru: "*Nabob of Cluelessness*".

Of course, quite irrespective of the fact that the balance-sheet of the Nehru-period was deep in red, it cannot be denied that Nehru meant well: it is another matter that his erroneous understanding of economics, foreign affairs, external security and many more things led to policies that proved disastrous for the country. Also, he was well-intentioned. *But, then, road to hell is often paved with good intentions!*

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