### **DEFEAT OF GRAND ALLIANCE**

The election results of Bihar have come. NDA has won. The Grand Alliance has lost. Nitish Kumar has become the Chief Minister. But the question is, how did the Grand Alliance lose despite being on the verge of victory? Most of the country's pre-poll surveys showed the Grand Alliance winning. What are the reasons for the Grand Alliance's defeat in the Bihar Assembly elections? There are many reasons for defeat.

Not tough economic question from the Government Economic questions were not asked from the Nitish Kumar's government. The Grand Alliance also did not raise these questions among the public. During the 15 years of governance, how much Nitish Government increased Bihar's GDP, how much per capita income of people of Bihar increased, how many jobs were given, inflation control, how much FDI came to Bihar, how many companies invested in Bihar, what is Bihar's ranking in Ease of Business, etc. Grand alliance does not have face of the Chief Minister

The biggest reason for the defeat of the Grand Alliance was the absence of a mature and effective face as the Chief Minister. The NDA was benefited from this. The NDA had a credible and acceptable face like Nitish Kumar for the chief minister's post. Tejashwi Yadav has no experience, due to which he fell behind in

The Muslim vote split with Owaisi's party in Bihar assembly elections. Mostly the Muslim vote would have gone to the RJD, Congress and constituents. The arrival of Asaduddin Owaisi led to the disintegration of Muslim votes, which resulted in the defeat of

Chirag Paswan's main objective was to weaken the JDU. There is very little in politics that one person should work to harm his party and benefit other parties. Chirag Paswan did the same thing. Chirag Paswan could also work with the Grand Alliance to harm JDU. No concerted efforts were made to bring Chirag Paswan into the grand alliance, otherwise results of the Bihar Legislative Assembly would have been different.

This time, the vote percentage in the Bihar Assembly elections has been very low, which the Mahagathbandhan lost. When there is an anti-incumbency against the Government, the voting percentage is higher. The Grand Alliance could not get people out of the house to vote. If the voting percentage were higher, it would clearly benefit the Grand Alliance.

This time, women vote percentage in Bihar assembly elections is more than men. Women are happier with most of Nitish Kumar's policies. The high vote percentage of women led to the defeat of the Grand Alliance.

Talk about jobs, nothing about Self-employment and entrepreneurship Tejashwi Yadav talked about 10 lakh government jobs in his election rallies but paid no attention to self-employment nor did he talk about it. Today there is a desire among people for more self-employment than jobs.

One of the main reasons for the defeat of the Grand Alliance was the 'Modi Magic'. The rallies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi had a huge impact on the election to the Bihar Assembly. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's victory in this Bihar assembly election is definitely bigger than Nitish Kumar's victory. Had the election campaign of Prime Minister Narendra Modi not been possible, the Grand Alliance would have won the election.

The NDA had a face similar to that of Nitish Kumar, who could be presented to the public as the Chief Minister. In 15 years, Nitish Kumar has done a good job as a Chief Minister. Has given good governance. In contrast, the Grand Alliance did not have a face as an acceptable Chief Minister like Nitish Kumar, which he

One of the main reasons for the defeat of the Grand Alliance was excessive trust in Congress and giving it 70 seats for the assembly elections. The Congress lost the election in about 73% of the seats. If confidence in Congress was reduced, Congress would be given less seats, then the result of Bihar assembly elections would be in favor of Grand Alliance.

This time, the difference of victory in dozens of seats in Bihar assembly elections was less than 1,000 votes. If Tejashwi Yadav could manage the constituents of the grand alliance and keep everyone united, then the difference of 1,000 votes would have been in favour of the Grand Alliance. The Grand Alliance could have easily won this election.

Somewhere questions are also being raised on the selection of candidates. Special attention was not paid to the selection of candidates. Criteria required for selection were not determined. This also had a negative effect in the form of electoral defeat to the Grand Alliance. The contest in the Bihar assembly elections was fierce. NDA's victory has not been easy. The credibility of the entire NDA was at stake. Along with the Grand Alliance, the NDA also needs to be vigilant for the upcoming elections like West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh.

(Prof. Vivek Singh)

### OFF 'D' ST CUFF

What is consciousness, where is it located in the brain? Recent scientific research may provide possible answers. There are several definitions of consciousness. but the most accepted one is that it is awareness. When a being becomes aware of itself and its surroundings, then, it is a sign of consciousness.

Awareness is an outcome of thought. The thinking brain makes us aware of our existence and externalities If we understand what is thought and where it resides in the brain, we could solve the mystery of conscious-

Thought is produced when brain neurons fire. There are close to 100 billion neurons in the brain. For simple thoughts - like asking what is the colour of a flower or requesting someone to open the door - a small portion of neurons fire. But in deep Samadhi, which produces Sanvam - combination of concentration and contemplation on a single subject or object - almost all neurons fire, to produce a deep thought.

Activation of neural pathways triggers the firing of neurons. This activation takes place either by signals from sense organs or stimulation of a certain memory space in the brain. Neural

# **Synchronisation**

pathways help neurons to communicate with each

of fireflies with

glow

During this communication, an electrical signal from a neuron is converted into chemicals (neurotransmitters) and transmitted across the synaptic cleft to another neuron where it is again converted to an electrical signal for the onward iournev.

Scientists have shown that the conversion of an electrical signal to chemicals and then again to an electrical signal, produces weak photons, possibly in the synaptic cleft. I conjecture that these photons from a large number of neural pathways synchronise to form a threedimensional hologram, which we can call a thought. In nature, a similar thing takes place when fireflies spontaneously synchronise their glow to create a signal pattern.

These signals - firing of neurons or fireflies glowing synchronise spontaneously since they are influenced by each other via a positive feedback-type mechanism. For example, in the case of fireflies, this feedback is through their light signals, where they adjust their phases so that they synchronise.

## Gilgit-Baltistan: Integral part of India

■BRIGADIER DR VIJAY SAGAR DHEMAN

akistan assumed full control of the territory in 1947. Maharaja Hari Singh of Jammu and Kashmir State or anyone from Union of India never even contested Pakistan's claim. Pakistan made sure that the region is separated from the POJK and remains devoid of any civil liberties, human rights or even basic modern habitat. There was no local representation in administration or any courts unlike in the case of POJK. Many a time, the cases for rights and privileges for people of this region were contested in courts in Pakistan resulting the verdict in favour of the Gilgit-Baltistan. The Govt of Pakistan either could reverse the decision in higher court or offer some convincing argument to avoid implementation of the verdict. The basic problem is that the constitution of Pakistan does not consider this region as part of Pakistan even

In 1963, Pakistan unilaterally handed over approx 5000 Km of area of Shakasgam in Hunza to China. Mir of Hunza protested but to no avail. Thus till 1970, there were no rights and Gilgit-Baltistan continued to be under the tyranny of Pakistan Army. The system of governance was same as during British lease prior to 1947. In Apr 1949, this region got bifurcated by an agreement signed between Pakistan Minister of Kashmir Affairs and Mohammad Ibrahim, President of POJK along with Ghulam Abbas, President of Muslim Conference in POJK. The people of Gilgit-Baltistan challenge this agreement as it did not have any representation of Gilgit-Baltistan. Besides, this agreement also contradicts the UN Resolution 91 adopted on 30 Mar 1951 and UN Resolution 122 adopted on 24 Jan 1954. The age-old draconian law Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR) since British regime to crush the locals was in force. Northern Area Legislative Council (NALC) was formed but instead of electing the members, they used to be selected from Islamabad. This was only in advisory role with no powers of final say.

In 1990, there was an attempt to give some representation to the locals in administration and this area was renamed as 'Northern Areas'. In 1974, Bhutto Govt abolished the state subject law, still in force since Maharaja's times, and went in for massive Sunni settlements in the garb of traders, Mullahs and ex-servicemen. The influx of outsiders did not help the locals in any way and they started resenting their presence. Shia-Sunni riots became very common. Simultaneously, this region being in the vicinity of NWFP, lot of terror organisations (Sunni sect) started having their terror training camps. This region saw the worst Shia-Sunni riots in 1998 and 1992. In 1988, Brigadier Parvez Musharaf personally led the commandos and 1,000 terrorists from Khyber Pakhtoonwa to massacre the Shias in this region. On an instant, Osama Bin Laden, who had his hide-outs in this region,

#### PAKISTANI INDIFFERENCE & EXPLOITATION

is believed to have led the Sunni terrorists to decimate the Shias. Needless to say that Shias retaliated with full force and survived.

As per a political activist Shakoor Khan. now in exile, "Gilgit-Baltistan had a population of two million. Now it has been reduced to approx 14 Lakh. There are no civic amenities like potable water and electricity. The land and the forests have been exploited by the Pakistani Generals and politicians and bureaucrats for their personal gains. The basic food items coming from Pakistan are of poor quality and are available to public at an exorbitant cost. Prominent activists like Col Hassan were jailed for 13 continuous years and his home was destroyed. His son Wajahat Aslam is on exile to UK." Despite persecution from the Govt, a movement has been started for independence. Idea of Independent Balwaristan comprising of the areas of Dardistan, Baltistan, Astore and parts of Ladakh is gaining ground.

Today there are high levels of discrimina-

dents of Gilgit-Baltistan. The gun culture whether against Pakistan or China is rampant. The soldiers of Northern Light Infantry of Pakistan Army (residents of Gilgit-Baltistan) feel slighted due to sectarian issues. No claim of dead-bodies of Northern Light Infantry soldiers by Pakistan during Kargil War irks them on continuous basis. People are also aghast with the announcement of construction of Daimer Basha dam. This dam though being in geographical region of Basha (Khyber Pakhtoonwa), yet it is called Diamer Basha dam. This has been done to avoid paying the royalty to the province. Pakistan has cleverly avoided the issue by calling it 'Provisional Province of Pakistan' and not 'Province of Pakistan' in the constitution. The electricity produced will go to Pakistan or China and large tracts of land in Gilgit-Baltistan will be submerged in water displacing 60,000 people in 30 villages. Compensations from Pakistan are hard to come by. Ever since the construction of the Karakoram HW started, China, has been looting all rich mineral like Uranium, Titanium, Gold and the forest resources to damage the biodiversity of the ecosystems in this region.

Pakistan has conducted the elections on 15th Nov 2020 in Gilgit-Baltistan but they are unlikely to bring any change in the lives of the residents. Pakistan has been forced by the rattled China to integrate this region in Constitution of Pakistan. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passes through this region. If India, integrates it back into its territory, the CPEC would cease to exist. Pakistan has a dilemma on this. If Pakistan integrates this region as its fifth province, case of integrating whole of Jammu and Kashmir in Pakistan territory gets diluted in the proceedings in UNO. But being a subservient vassal state of China, does it have a choice?

(To be continued) (The author is leading Defence and Strategic Expert, prolific writer, National TV News Commentator and Internationally

### Save water bodies

■ANUJ K. VERMA

Tuman race has evolved so much, today, that humans are planning for future settlement colonies on Moon and Mars. Much progress has been made almost in every sphere of life. But, unfortunately, what we are forgetting is Humans' co-existence with Nature and respect for our eco system; Much development has been made but it is not all that sustainable development. Humans over exploited natural resources and caused severe damages to mother-nature. Human greed even did not spare water bodies, which are lifeline for any area, any region. Here we are talking about Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory which was earlier part of the J&K state including Ladakh. As a rough estimate, there are around 1.000 famous water bodies in J&K UT. itself and like in rest part of India, water-bodies are deeply attached with our religious sentiments, one way or the other. This is the land where most of the natural springs are revered as 'Nag like Verrinag, Gurdashnag, Vasuki Nag Kund, Malak Nag, Gaj-Nag, Hemal-Nag, Soner Khosi-Nag, Gratbal-Nag, Pokher-Nag, MalNnag, Hatbal-Nag among others. These springs have been considered holy both by Hindu as well as Muslim communities since centuries together.

Likewise, JK UT has a number of rivers flowing through its land like river Tawi in Jammu. Jehlum in Kashmir, mighty Chenab, river Devak in Udhampur, Basanter, Ravi, Ujh, Pulistar, Kishanganga, Gupt Ganga at Purmandal. Our land is also bestowed with a number of lakes viz., World famous Dal, Wullar, Manasbal, Nageen, Mansar, Surinser, Sanasar, Tarsar, Marsar, Anchar, Krishansar. I might have missed names of many other famous water bodies including water falls, ponds and wet lands.

Let's have an analysis about condition of few famous water bodies, here, in J&K UT. Regarding river Tawi, the Surva Putri flows through a vast area of Jammu province. Since, I've been brought up in Jammu, itself, unfortunately I've been witness to continuing deterioration in its condition. Its banks are encroached by legal or illegal constructions during last three four decades. Perhaps people did not have land to construct houses, so thought it feasible to build up their houses on river banks and for one or the other reasons, the enforcement agencies also remained mute spectator. Reportedly, around thirty city sewerage Nullahs with affluent wastes fell into river Tawi, making its water highly polluted with cause for other problems, too. Same is the condition on banks of river Jehlum in Kashmir valley where mashroom growth of commercial as well as residential structures has come up on bunds of Jehlum Daily wastes including plastic garbage, night soil from these concrete structures as well from houseboats, usually, goes directly into river Jehlum, thus highy polluting its water. Generally, these bunds, alongwith flood channels, were built up & spared to save city population from floods. The authorities need to ponder upon this issue seriously. All such structures on banks of the rivers should be got demolished with rehabilitation of existing dwellers by shifting them to other areas. Government may think about compensating them with cost of construction of structures. Usually, such dwellers have the plea that why the concerned authorities kept silence when they were making constructions on river banks, whether legal or illegal. These structures should be demolished and replaced

with dense plantations of native trees like Peepal, Chinar, Mulberry, Jamun, Arjun, Neem etc, which'll not only stop soil erosion but also shall improve quality of the air. This shall also help in reviving back the receding levels of ground water. Same policy needs to be adopted in case of Dal Lake. Dal Lake is crown of Kashmir like Kashmir is crown of India. The famous Dal Lake which was spread in approximately 26 sq km area is now shrunk upto 10-15 water hole. Increasing numbers of houseboats, encroachments have polluted its waters badly. No need to write again that most of the sewerage, wastes, night soil from houseboats & illegal structures raised over Dal Lake area have done havoc to this world famous lake. Human greed is unending and an afraid if not acted promptly by the government with active participation of people, we might loose this big water hole converting into a small pond or only a marshy land. Hundreds of crores have been spent over its cleaning, but this is high time to tackle the root cause, once for all. Kashmiri people should also come forward to vacate & demolish all illegal structures raised over last three four decades on Dal lake area.

Now, let's talk about condition of few other water bodies like mighty Wular lake spread in approximately 200 sq Km of area, most of its parts having turned into marshy land due to human apathy. Carcasses of dead animals, throwing of city garbage, plastics & scraps with heavy vegetation had made its condition worst. But, with the efforts of few environment activists, scrap collectors, local nature lovers & local municipal bodies, there is good improvement. Continuous efforts need to be carried on to bring Wular lake back to its lost glory.

(To be continued)

### Biden, Modi & changing dimensions of Indo-US relations

■ PRIYANKA SAURABH

Toe Biden is the new President of the United States. He has defeated Republican candidate and former President Donald Trump. America is the most influential country in the present world, so the change of power in America will have an impact on most of the countries of the world India was emerging as an important ally of America for some time. Howdy Modi in the US and Namaste Trump in India were the results of close intimacy between the leaders of the two countries. In this situation, the change of power in America will also change the dimensions of India-US relations.

In his victory speech, he emphasised a mes sage of unity and said that the time had come to 'heal and restore the soul of America.' I pledge to be a president who does not want to divide but wants to unite. For all of you who voted for President Trump, I understand the disappointment tonight. But now give each other a chance. Joe Biden has been in favour of the India-US strategie relationship since the time of former President Obama. However, Trump was more focused on Indo-Pacific region, where India became an important ally of the United States to stop China, and it is likely that Biden would remain an important ally In addition, the policies of India and the United States against peacekeeping and terrorism in Afghanistan will also be imple mented in the same direction.

Obama and Biden strengthened cooperation with India to fight terrorism in each of their countries and across the region. Biden believes that there can be no tolerance for terrorism in South Asia.' While he did not say much during his time in administration on Pakistan-sponsored terrorism, the Indian government hopes he will carry forward the legacy of the US administration's attitude towards India-Pakistan when it comes to cross-border terrorism. The Trump administration had unilaterally banned the nuclear deal with Iran, which was against the previous Obama administration's decision India's relations with both the US and Iran are good. In such a situation, a dilemma was faced by India. It is possible that the Joe Biden administration will resolve this situa-

In the Trump administration, the US was moving away from international organisa tions such as the World Health Organisation, UNESCO, the Human Rights Commission. India is in favour of the importance of global institutions. In this situation there was a reversal in the policies of India and the Trump administration. Perhaps, the United States recognised the importance of these global institutions under Joe Biden's administration. Under Trump's leadership, the US was disassociating itself from the Paris Climate Treaty while India is making all efforts to upgrade the environment. Under Joe Biden's rule, it is possible that the Paris Treaty would be recognised by the USA. The Trump administration imposed restrictions on Indian goods in favour of the US in an effort to separate India from the GSP category, along with the Indo-US trade

It is possible that India again joins GSP category under the Biden administration. The situation is likely to improve for nonresident Indians and people of Indian origin who were negatively affected by Trump's protectionist policies. Vice President Kamala Harris is also of Indian origin. The report of the American Commission or International Religious Freedom described India as a country of religious persecution, to which the Trump administration's response was neutral, but Biden administration's vice-president Kamala Harris made her statement against it. At the same time, the Trump administration was neutral on the subject of the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, violation of democracy, Citizenship Amendment Act, caste and communal violence, while Kamala Harris reacted against India over these issues.

### YOUR COLUMN

### Effectively balancing preparations for competitive exams

Dear Editor

The developing minds amid these past few months of lockdown have been through a good deal of uncertainty and stress, trying to figure out what lies ahead like every other adult. As they proceed in the new normal and prepare themselves for appearing in the competitive exams, they need not just moral and emotional support from their guides and parents but also few tactics to effectively sail through this period, without causing any hindrance to their performance. Some of them are:

Right time assessment & management: Effective time management has been a basic disciplinary habit for the preparation of every competitive exam. Imbibing this value has now become all the more crucial because students have to juggle between online and offline studying time. Factors such as poor network, delay in starting of classes, non-availability of structured study material, quality of material available online, would be different variables affecting their course of preparation. As such, the need for them to multi-task remains inevitable, also they must not let their dedication and passion mellow down due to such interruptions. Adaptability and flexibility are the ultimate mottos to follow.

Segregate online and offline study material: Most of the students take coaching classes for the preparation of competitive exams, while some resort to school learning only. In both cases, plan the schedule as per the availability of your mentors/teachers. Always keep a margin for self-studies, as grasping concepts is most successful when students make efforts to comprehend themselves. The study material available online is vast and scattered, organise it as per the usefulness and your paper pattern. Be open with your teachers/mentors and seek guidance from them for better study material.

Practice previous year papers: This practice of attempting previous years' question papers is extremely crucial as it presents a fair picture to you about the scale of your preparation. Many coaching institutes are conducting online mock sessions to give their students a clear idea about their standing amongst fellow aspirants. Such institutions also conduct multi-city tests among their several branches, which prepares the student for appearing at the national level. These mock tests in pre-COVID times began usually from the month of October and go up to April for letting the students get a good hold of the qualifying pattern.

Breaks are really important: Breaks help you beat the boredom. The numerical, derivatives, and problem-solving can take a toll on a student's mind. Retention levels deteriorate if one studies at a stretch. It is advisable by the experts to take smaller breaks in between for improving retention and also engaging in something more relaxing for the mind. It can be listening to music, taking a walk, painting, or any other activity which makes students feel at

Vijay Garg, Malout Punjab.

### Bihar Election results

Electorates of Bihar have given a fresh lease of life to NDA. Much improved BJP's tally has enabled the NDA to retain power in Bihar. Generally Exit-Poll predictions do not go wrong notwithstanding instances of exceptions. The Bihar election result has come in such a way that the projections were done by the agencies accurately but only inadvertently mistake was made by the agencies to say NDA for MGB and MGB for NDA. Apparently Congress has been facing existential crisis. This national party has been playing second fiddle to the regional parties in the respective states. Congress had 27 seats in the 2015 Assembly and now it has been reduced to 19. For NDA also it is no clean sweep in Bihar. NDA struggled hard to retain power. It was a cliffhanger. JDU needs to introspect since it has come down from 71 seats in 2015 Assembly

to 43 seats in 2020 Assembly. BJP has reason to be jubilant as its seat share increased from 53 seats in the 2015 Assembly to 74 seats in the 2020 Assembly election. BJP should not bask under the glory of increased tally. Laxity in performance exacts its price in the next election. BJP always cannot bank upon the

charisma of Prime Minister Narendra Modi only. BJP has also reason to be very happy at its performance in by-polls conducted in Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur, Karnataka and Telangana. Congress has bagged one out of 2 seats in Jharkhand, bagged a lone seat in Chhattisgarh and wrested the seat from BJP in Haryana. Karnataka delivered a severe blow to the newly appointed State President of Congress D.K. Shivakumar, the jailbird. Possibly the appointment of D.K. Shivakumar as President of the party has not cut ice with the voters. Nothing has been done by the Congress to come out of its sagging image in Karnataka also. Congress is so desperate that it is prepared to allow any party with far less number of seats than it has, to run the Government with its support and play second fiddle to it with an one point-agenda of keeping the BJP out of power. This approach has kept the party under check. Congress must change its outlook towards BJP, even though it does not mean that it should join its hands with BJP. Congress is being seen as a tainted party by the people. Unless it makes sincere efforts to refurbish its dented image, its presence in political map

would continue to be just symbolic. Shiv Sena needs to emulate BJP. BJP is sticking to its promise of working in the JDU-led government in Bihar allowing Nitish Kumar to continue as Chief Minister. Shiv Sena made departure from its natural ally BJP to join hands with Congress and NCP, who were once his party's arch political rivals for the sake of power. No party should go back on its commitment. People can see through the designs of every party and they will definitely teach a lesson when the next

K.V. Seetharamaiah,

Via-e-mail.