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Afghan Taliban—Fiery Eenampeechi Or Friendly Neighbourhood Comrade?

By Dr Prabhakaran Paleri

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Eenampeechi is an expression in Malayalam, the language of Kerala, the southern coastal state of India. The term is not overly heard nowadays. But it used to shiver the timbers out of Keralite kids once upon a time, especially in the dark.

The legend of eenampeechi was strong. Children would make up the eenampeechi as an ugly short figure with a tail, sharp claws, long protruding blood-red tongue and a body full of hard scales. The peechi (shortened to pronounce easy for outliers and those inliers proud about their handicap in native language) was a monster in the imagination of children. Way later would they realise the creature was nothing but a harmless ant-eating Indian pangolin that had created the fear, being a rarely seen animal in the outskirts of Kerala. Pangolins even otherwise cause a phobic yuck factor in many including the author. There could be similar peechies in the economic world too with a place of reference in economic security. The study by the author on the velocity of flow of money in an economic system stumbled upon something similar—the econopeechies of outgrown lazy money, the cause for many conflicts in the world along with a few good things in support of governance.

The economic peechies are different. They don't eat ants. They exist as mysteriously today in the grapevine, but not as harmless. They can cause trouble in governance and human systems if they get involved. And they do. Money is an individual matter at the bottom of all quests of power. It is a psychonomical paradox. Money flows through the human palm randomly in various streams (including virtual streams today) at different velocities. Theoretically, it is a closed circulatory system like the blood flow system (cardiovascular) in the human body. In reality, the money flow assumes a different pattern of open feedback. An open system can kill the living unless controlled. For example, the blood when opened out of the body may be diverted into a biocompatible bag for storage and transfusion. In the economic system when the flow of money becomes uncontrollably fast in the suction line, the reservoir, opened to the delivery line, gets stagnated by overfilling beyond the normal flow. Accumulation of money creates a kind of money stagnation in the palm owner's reservoir and makes the person Illuminati (Paleri, 2021) of sorts with excess lazy money that the individual may have to belch out as if in economic gastritis. The belching happens on a different track that cannot be governed easily. Even a government could get overthrown by its force of reflux before it could spell Jack Robinson. See, Afghanistan; the author agrees he could be wrong.

Illuminaties are powerful because they got a lot of outgrown lazy money in the reservoir. Money need not make one happy; the wise old humans say. Of course, the statement could also be made by people as an excuse for rationalising the lack of it. But, certainly, money is the symbol of power distributed through politics and faith, the binary axes, on which the human power system churns as if in a centrifuge. Money is the chosen symbol of power to rule and make people submit subliminally or otherwise. Nobody kills for a visa too; they do it for money and fun in the fields of hell. The binary axes of the day, politics and faith, need it; a lot of it. That can flow from the outgrown lazy money pools of the economic eenampeechies of the Illuminati variety. And, who are these illuminaties or the econopeechies in this unpaid narrative?

A pretty young girl in the most powerful country once told the author in a hush-hush tone as if someone was listening, "Uncle, do you know the world is not controlled by (national) governments? They are controlled by the Illuminaties, the gangs of a few secretive people. Nobody has seen them or knows them, but the governments all over the world are under their control; they have to listen to them. No government can survive unless they submit to the illuminaties." The girl was true if the term Illuminati can be rerolled to the people who are excessively rich, close to the Conqueror Mansa (Emperor) Musa I of the erstwhile Mali Empire. His empire produced more gold than those of others. Mansa Musa I (1280-1337) is considered to be the world's richest man so far. It is possible considering the chances of overflow through the suction head of the money line under the velocity of flow of money principle in that era. It is not possible today under-regulated governance (yes, somewhat) the world over. No one so far has a larger reservoir of money than Musa. But people can still become mini Musas. It is very much possible under the natural process of psychonomics. That is when the closed-loop in the circulation system ruptures like a vein under increased blood pressure or a hydraulic dam under the pressure of water causing unregulated floods and associated collaterals. The damage to the system will depend upon where the burst is affected. Economic illuminaties or econopeechies can cause monitory haemorrhage in the economic system. The problem of outgrown lazy money will not be limited to a country or a geoentity. It will impact the whole global human system that is yet to be a defined system sans a definite boundary for governance. This is visible all around. The entire world can get roiled economically. It happened in the Musa effect of 1324. Musa's open-loop economic belching during the pilgrimage to Mecca was in the form of outlandish and extremely copious spending. It crashed the gold prices to the bottom pit and shot inflation to never imaginable heights in Egypt, Mecca and Medina. Some scholars believe it was his geostrategic show of economic strength. For the author, it was the simple psychonomic behaviour of a 14th-century emperor with the power of many illuminaties of the day.

Read Complete article on FINS website

Media in The Internet Age and its Itinerant Problems

By Shri. Uday Varma

Author Varma is a former IAS Officer of 1976 batch of Madhya Pradesh Cadre. He is Science Graduate from BHU and has a Masters degree in Public Administration from Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, USA. He retired in 2013 from the post of Secretary, Information and Broadcasting, GOI.

The world is now reluctantly but wisely conceding that a new age has forced itself in. Most, including some eminent members of a government think tank, still retain such a glamour of the industrial age that they have simply called it "Industrial Revolution 4.1". This is understandable: to tame our hubris and intemperance in disowning and discarding what we have toiled to build over the last many centuries will be difficult; it is also difficult to bypass the legacy of understanding every new development as a progress of industry, something that humans so passionately and painstakingly created, amplified and sustained. However, this view point, inevitably, is incorrect. The industrial age has attenuated. Long live the "Internet Age".

I would like to suggest four facets that are likely to define this new age. First, that isolation is going to be a way of life; maybe not quite like the times of COVID, but similar and in a more institutionalized manner. Secondly, the predominant industrial age tendency towards mindless overexploitation of natural resources will be seriously revisited; "back to nature" will be a compulsion as well as a call of the times. Thirdly, perhaps as a corollary, the dignity of labor and the salience of physical work in daily lives will get reestablished. To some these aspects may appear overly sanguine but they definitely fall within the realm of possibility.

Finally, and what I would like to focus on, the role of media as we see it today in communication and information dissemination will transmute inalterably. I believe each one of us in the internet age will be our own media – a TV channel, a broadcaster and an OTT platform. Blogs and vlogs will replace the newspapers and magazines of the world. The media landscape is likely to transform so comprehensively and fundamentally that in the very next decade we may see all that came prior such as channels, networks and platforms as nothing more than amusing, almost indulgent, nostalgia.

Media Business – A Melting Cauldron

There was a time when most media companies were linear, i.e. their major occupation was to deal in aspects of media in varying modes, print or electronic. So they could be in broadcasting or printing, and when the internet became ubiquitous, they could be a search engine or a platform. So Google became a search engine and Facebook a platform. Conventional broadcasting now comprised of companies who were offering news, entertainment, or a combination of both. In India, we had companies like Star, Zee and Sony doing so. But today, spurred on by OTT, a most exciting experiment that has birthed streaming service providers, this distinction is increasingly getting not just blurred but downright collapsed.

The fact that companies set up purely as e-commerce enterprises now have significant presence as purveyors of content previously considered exclusive preserve of media companies, such as Amazon Prime, only exhibits this smudging of the once clear lines dividing the various facets of media. I believe the media business landscape in the internet age will be one where every major enterprise will have a finger in this pie, not because it's a core business interest, but because they would need it to sub-serve, perpetuate, enlarge and maximise themselves with this most essential digital footprint; and this will be the purview not just of the corporation, but the individual too.

Regulation – The Continuing Bone of Contention

Notwithstanding whether we have giant corporations or an individual (anyone recalls

T-Series versus PewDiePie?) as our media standard bearers, regulation of media content will remain a pertinent issue. In India, notwithstanding the initiative taken by the government to resolve the contentious issues of content regulation by recognising mechanisms of self-regulation and offering it legal protection, the broadcasters and OTT intermediaries seem keen to keep this thorny issue protracted. The new MIB regulations and IT rules have been aggressively challenged in high courts. A prominent section of broadcasters and OTT players would like the government to be completely out of sight as far as content regulation is concerned.

The basic argument they articulate, couched in intelligently-worded statements and petitions, essentially seek supremacy of freedom of expression as enshrined in the Constitution with the state having no interference in this matter as the Industry is willing to self-regulate its content in a transparent manner. Their objection is that by retaining the role of ultimate and final arbiter in a content-related dispute, the government has negated the very essence of self-regulation.

While the Courts adjudicate over this matter, and it may be expedient to await a verdict, the more significant issue is the apparently reluctant and increasingly inadequate process of consultation and consensus-building. A reasonable via-media to resolve contested issues is eminently possible and this effort must concurrently continue irrespective of the judicial processes underway.

Conclusion – Condone, Confront, Conquer or Comply?

The key question to be asked of the state in the internet age is how is it to deal with the increasing power and hold that internet companies have on the lives and the future of people. This threat to the position of state has been anticipated in many quarters and a debate is raging on, sometimes openly, but more often obliquely. Irrespective of the form of government, democratic or authoritarian, monarchical or anarchical, the threat to the notion of state as we have understood it this century is real.

We cannot soothe ourselves with tenuous beliefs in a future with enlightened despotism of the internet giants held in place by the invisible hands of the free market. Given humans propensity to manipulate, those who control the internet will be prey to the same weaknesses and proclivities as the people who run the state. No technology can make humans more reasonable or less selfish.

If the state as we understand it is to survive, it will not accept this constant erosion of its hold and authority demurely or passively. Its patience will neither be infinite nor indefinite. Countries with lower levels of education and higher levels of authoritarianism will definitely better address any possible menace of internet induced unrest. China, for example, does not feel as threatened as India. But the bigger issue will always be: should the state as we have understood it survive? Or should it metamorphose, transfigure, mutate? Also, is any change or lack thereof really in anyone's hands?

The internet age holds a lot of promise but will also bring with it unknown, unanticipated and unchartered possibilities, many of which could be unpleasantly uneasy and unduly unsettling. The time to recognise and talk about them is now. Let the conversation begin.

What's Xi Doing?

By Prof Srikanth Kondapalli

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Something big is happening inside China. With the latest 'common security' concept, President Xi Jinping is rebooting domestic issues, with long-term consequences to its private sector, innovation, employment and market economy. Xi's ire has shifted to the private sector, which constitutes over 60% of China's GDP, 70% of technological innovation, 80% of urban employment and has over 90% of market players.

'Common Prosperity' has emerged in the Chinese lexicon recently as a panacea for all its socioeconomic ills. This comes in the wake of announcements on completing the "poverty alleviation" campaign. Like many other such concepts in the Communist Party (CCP)-dominated political space, such as "getting quick rich" (Deng Xiaoping), "three represents" (Jiang Zemin), "harmonious world" (Hu Jintao) and others, this is also expected to have a short political shelf life, though the projections are till 2035.

The 'Common Prosperity' slogan is currently an effort to reinforce the CCP's hold over the private sector, technological innovation, cultural industry and others that became prominent in the last four decades of reform, catapulting China to the world's second largest economy. The reforms seemed to have loosened the CCP's (or Xi Jinping's) hold over the levers of power. 'Common prosperity' is to reboot and apply a mid-course correction. In the run-up to next year's 20th party congress, these are significant developments in China.

On August 17, Xi, addressing the 10th meeting of the Central Financial and Economic Affairs Commission, spoke about ushering 'common prosperity'. Xi called it "an essential demand of socialism and an important characteristic of Chinese-style modernisation." He talked about "adhering to people centered development ideology," and discussed "coordinating and doing the work of forestalling major financial risks well." Xi is said to have invoked 'common prosperity' 65 times this year.

One of the issues to be addressed is the growing inequality between urban and rural incomes in China – measured in Gini coefficient – which is one of the highest in the world. China's official figures put it at around 0.4 on a scale of 0 to 1 (with 0 referring to equality, while reaching 1 would mean socioeconomic breakpoint). China had stopped issuing official data since 2000, although a Southwestern University of Finance and Economics report of 2012 suggested that the Gini coefficient has reached an alarming 0.61. China has more than 1,000 billionaires, double that of the US and other countries – who have quickly become the target of the 'common prosperity' campaign.

Xi's latest campaign has attacked the country's bourgeoning private sector -- ed-tech, fin-tech, food delivery and ride hailing services -- and the cultural industry. After Alibaba chief Ma Yun (Jack Ma) was silenced last year, as with Tencent, Meituan, Didi Chuxing and others, the rich coastal province of Zhejiang became the victim, with the party chief of its capital city, Hangzhou, Zhou Jiangyong 9/13/21, 11:03 AM What's Xi doing? | Deccan Herald https://www.deccanherald.com/opinion/panorama/what-s-xi-doing-1029449.html 2/2 replaced and put under "investigation" on August 21. Coincidentally, Alibaba's headquarters is in Hangzhou, and Zhou's family allegedly sought shares in the company.

That the private sector is falling in line can be seen from the fin-techs and others pledging their hardearned money to the country's welfare schemes. Tencent donated an entire year's profits and contributed $10 billion for a fund to promote 'common prosperity'. Alibaba, under regulatory siege for the past one year, announced $15 billion. Several Chinese economists dubbed this campaign as "robbing the rich to give to the poor".

While Xi may be trying to reduce the influence of his political rivals in the CCP, the recent campaign is expected to unsettle the private sector in the short term, with an expected slow-down due to the "double circulation" strategy under implementation, too. The campaign is expected to increase property tax on the private sector, regulatory mechanisms and other measures and create further fissures in global supply chain mechanisms.

Article Courtesy Deccan Herald

The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP) – Unleashing India's Economy

By Dr Seshadri Chari

Author is a commentator on foreign policy, strategy and security affairs. He is Secretary General of the Forum for Integrated National Security (FINS) and former editor of English weekly Organiser.

Public assets all over the world have been recognised as a definite and easy source of revenue for governments in dire need of resources. Unlocking the potential of unused and underutilised national assets created over a few years is not a bad idea but needs to be implemented wisely if the government wants to avoid being caught on the wrong foot. Democracies and countries practising free market economy have used asset monetising process to raise resources and had varied experiences, from great success to abject failure. One hopes that the finance ministry has studied the process, considered global experiences and planned a fool proof roadmap.

The Union government has announced an ambitious plan to tap the pipeline of assets and monetise them so as to collect about six trillion rupees to partly fund its ambitious infrastructure projects over the next four years ending 2024-25. The plan, when implemented with military precision, will rake in about 88,000 crore through asset monetisation in the current financial year. The National Monetisation Pipeline (NMP), a special purpose vehicle (SPV), will add up to 14 per cent of the government's share of 43.29 trillion in the National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP).

The NMP will cover twenty categories of assets consisting of twelve ministries and departments which will include roadways, railways and power, three top sectors, valued at about one and a half trillion rupees. Unutilised or underutilised brown field assets will also be put on the monetisation block for auction which proudly display a 'blue chip' tag earned over the last four or five decades. 25 airports, 27 thousand kms of roads, 6 Gw power projects, 160 coal mines, about 8000 kms of natural gas pipeline; the list of gleaming assets is endless.

The severe resource crunch due to Coronavirus pandemic induced economic meltdown has resulted in unprecedented spending and negative tax collection. This is the case of the economies all over the world. The global investment climate appears to be waiting for the developing economies to get into production mode once again. Any further delay in the markets beginning to come alive will deal a much greater blow to many emerging economies.

The economic downturn has also forced the central banks in several emerging economies in Asia and elsewhere to look for easy access to revenue without resorting to printing currency leading to inflationary trend.

By August 2020 nearly 68 members of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) had announced packages amounting to a total of about 19,500 billion dollars. Out of this nearly 3,656 billion dollars corresponds to economic recovery packages announced by 46 member countries falling under developing economies category. Direct support to income through spending and tax cuts etc., account for about 7,687 billion dollars.

The process of asset monetisation globally has not been as bad as it is expected to be and not as good as the government believes it will turn out to be. The process of asset and debt monetisation in China, Philippines, Singapore and the US has produced mixed results. The trick lies somewhere in between the good and bad examples. The seminal question is will the government learn from global experience or prefer to learn through mistakes.

There is no doubt that these are very challenging times for economies of developing countries which have a large number of unemployed people depending solely on agriculture and erratic wages. Selling off the family silver in such times appears to be prudent than aimlessly holding on to it merely for its notional vintage value. The creation of these assets has taken more than five to six decades through the sacrifices of two generations. The government therefore has to place on record its gratitude to all those previous governments who are responsible for the creation of these assets. This also mandates the present government to utilise the revenue judiciously to create more assets and not indulge in profligacy.

It is no secret that a number of public sector assets are underutilised or not put to optimum utilisation. Such assets can be and should be put to proper use through monetisation so as to create greater financial comfort. The government, caught in the whirlpool of resource crunch seeks to unlock the value of these national assets. Besides providing resources, the monetisation is also a process through which the management of these assets can be transferred to private sector for better financial management. There is nothing wrong if the government admits that it has no reason to be in the business of managing business.

While the government avowedly claims that it is not selling away the assets, its assurance is likely to be viewed with suspicion and taken with more than a pinch of salt. Those who have dealt with governments in the past know that monetisation is euphuism for privatisation.

Read Complete article on Chanakya Forum website

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Nation is Indebted to:

Abhigya Anand
Young Astrologer

Talent is a God gifted virtue and every human being has talent in some measure or other. However some have this in abundance which cannot be explained in simple words. Young astrologer Abhigya Anand is one of such examples.

One of the gems in astrology and Vastu Shastra, Abhigya Anand from Global Child Prodigy Awards 2020 Winners list, (world's first and only child prodigy initiative), had warned the whole world about the possibility of a pandemic-outbreak, way before it happened. And, Abhigya Anand's Corona Outbreak Prediction has been the talk of the town in recent times.

To give you a little context about Abhigya, and why he's been doing rounds on the Internet, this child prodigy is the youngest astrologer of the world, who was born in 2006 at Srirangapatna, Karnataka, India, his parents are Anand Ramasubramanian (father) and Annu Anand (mother). He is truly a god gifted kid, and his accolades include ME in Sanskrit & being the youngest PG in the field of Ayurveda. After completing his studies, he started giving engaging yet long lectures lasting for 2–3 hours, and one of his sessions contained 400+ ppt slides.

His mother introduced him to these subjects so she plays an important role in Abhigya's journey. After that there were many inspirational personalities that Abhigya has come across. But mainly his parents inspired him the most to follow this path.

In August 2019, he uploaded a video titled 'Severe Danger ToThe World'. From Nov 2019 to April 2020', this went viral on the Internet and crossed 6 million views.

In that video, he also claimed that this outbreak would tend to slow down by May 31. Also, there'll be a relief for a couple of days. But there won't be any permanent recovery until June 30, 2020.

He further stated that this pandemic would affect 80% of the entire population of the world, and end up killing approx 20% of them. The destruction of this pandemic may end for good. But this will not mean that the suffering of people will also stop, as countless people will continue to die, because of starvation, post Covid complications etc. Many superpowers will lose their current glory, and new superpowers will emerge.

When Abhigya attended Global Child Prodogy (GCP) Awards 2020 Ceremony, in an exclusive interview with GCP team, he mentioned "Vastu Shastra and astrology are sciences dating each other from the beginning of the universe because they are connected to the planets, stars and various celestial objects in-universe and a person who doesn't agree to scientific concepts would say no to science, which operates based on planets. And, planets influence humans, because they surround us all. Also, it will be wrong to say they do not influence us."

Global Child Prodigy is the first and only organization that recognizes the talents from various countries and backgrounds. The GCP Award list includes children having extreme competency in their field of interest such as painting, modelling, entrepreneurship, etc.

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