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A Happy & Prosperous New Year**

Howl Of Protest Over J&K Delimitation Isn't A Surprise. PDP, NC Didn't Mind Injustice To Jammu

By Dr Seshadri Chari

Author is a Secretary General of the Forum for Integrated National Security (FINS). Dr Chari writes on foreign policy, strategy, and security affairs.

The strange thing about democracy is that no matter what the government does, it is dubbed controversial and pulls the government into a controversy. Nothing can explain this better than the Jammu and Kashmir delimitation exercise. The previous delimitation was undertaken under then-J&K Constitution and the J&K Representation of People Act, 1957. These Acts carried a huge amount of history and legacy. Tweaking of seats in the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir appears to have been done nearly ten times since the erstwhile princely state's accession to India.

Justice (Retd) Ranjana Prakash Desai, the head of the current delimitation commission constituted in March 2020, has shared the proposals. According to the preliminary recommendations, the commission has proposed six additional seats to Jammu region and one additional seat to the Valley.

The howl of protests from nearly all political parties, the Valley as well as Jammu and even a section of the supporters of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) at the Centre, should not come as a surprise.

Politics at play

The main grouse against the previous delimitations was that it was not based on scientific principles of population. The seats were arbitrarily decided, and an official stamp made it mandatory for the people and the political parties to accept it. The Jammu voters, overwhelmingly Hindus who have voted for either the Congress or the BJP en-block, were unhappy with the 1963, 1973 and 1995 delimitation exercises, lamenting that Jammu never got enough representation in the government. The assembly seat distribution was such that Jammu would never get a majority, sufficient to elect a chief minister.

When the delimitation work began, it was hoped that it would set right the 'historical wrong' done to Jammu. The work started with the 2011 Census as the base, which was obvious. But there were allegations against the outcome of the Census figures, which were allegedly skewed in favour of the voters

in the Valley. Unusual population growth patterns were emerging out of the final census figures in Kashmir Valley constituencies, which was very difficult to explain.

A cursory look at the census figures from 1981 to 2011 would reveal some flaws. For example, in Barwala village of Gandelbal district, there was a population increase of 164 per cent in 20 years while just 9 per cent in the next 10 years. In the forest block of Ganderbal, population increase was a whopping 728 per cent in 20 years as against 23 per cent in the next 10 years. It was the same in many other villages in Pulwama district.

Where does one go from here? Parties opposing the delimitation report are aware of the fact that the political situation in J&K has undergone a massive change, rather a metamorphosis, post 5 August 2019 when Article 370 was shelved. There is no going back on the abrogation of J&K's special status. This no doubt has seriously dented the prospects of at least two parties, the National Conference (NC) and the People's Democratic Party (PDP). The Congress was never a serious player in constituencies where these two are strong. Both NC and PDP can oppose the new proposals and yet manage to retain hold over their constituencies. But for the Congress, it is a strange predicament. It will be difficult for the party to oppose the delimitation proposals and make a dent in the electoral prospects of NC and PDP. By supporting the delimitation, it will not gain in Jammu either.

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The Australian Submarine Landscape: Takeaways For The Indian Navy

By Cmde CP Srivastava

Author is a veteran submariner and the Director, Intellectual Resource and Consulting.

Submarines are exceptionally complicated beasts to design, construct and operate. The technological complexities, operational challenges and sustenance demands multiply manifold when SSNs are added into the scenario. In all fairness, any nation attempting to transform from a buyer to a builder's navy, must endure the pains and trauma as they traverse the learning curve. It is, therefore, only prudent that others attempting to travel the same path, learn and avoid making the same set of mistakes.

In September 2021, the Australian government signed the AUKUS agreement with the UK and US. This may have been driven by the realisation that the contract with DCNS, France, for design and construction of 12 Short Fin Barracuda class ocean-going conventional submarines, may not address their strategic concern of containment of the Chinese in the Indo-Pacific. Notwithstanding its hitherto anti-nuclear stance as a nation, the Australian government decided to bite the bullet and cancelled their ongoing contract with DCNS.

The Australian submarine arm has three distinct phases: the induction of the indigenously built Collins Class submarines, the now defunct, Australian- Naval Group contract for 12 Short Fin Barracuda Class submarines and the recently inked AUKUS agreement. It may be prudent to analyse the Australian experience and identify, both, good practices/concepts and avoidable pitfalls.

The Australian Submarine Landscape

In 1987, the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) shortlisted the enlarged version of the Swedish Vaster Gotland class as a replacement for its Oberon Class submarines. Locally christened as the Collins Class,

six of these boats were to be indigenously built, between 1990 and 2003, by the newly formed Australian Submarine Corporation, ASC, at an approximate cost of AUD \$5.1 billion.

The Collins Class

The programme and the platforms have been subject to many accusations – of foul play, bias during design selection, faulty construction protocols, major capability deficiencies, technical and operational problems. It took the Australian DoD, ASC and the RAN, almost 20 years to achieve high availability and accepted levels of combat effectiveness. Initially expected to retire by 2026, these vessels are likely to remain in service well into the 2030s.

Short Fin Barracuda- The Collins Class Replacement

In 2015, the Australian DoD issued an invitation to TKMS (Germany), Naval Group (France) and Mitsubishi and Kawasaki (Japan) to submit their design concepts for '12 Ocean Going Diesel – Electric submarines to be built in Australia, under the Future Submarine Programme (FSP), Project SEA 1000, as replacements for the Collins Class. Primarily driven by their requirement for enhanced range, endurance and low indiscretion rates, the DCNS's 'Short Fin Barracuda', a derivative of the Barracuda Class SSN, was shortlisted. The initial value of the project was AUD\$50 billion, with a delivery time of 15 years.

The AUKUS Partnership and Cancelling the Naval Group Contract

In the face of growing delays, cost increase and more importantly, the changed geo-strategic situation in the SCS, on September 15, 2021, the governments of Australia, UK and US announced that the RAN would be cancelling the contract with Naval Group and embarking on a partnership, to 'deliver a nuclear-powered submarine fleet to Australia'.

Takeaways for the Indian Navy (IN)

In their quest to evolve into ship building Navies, both IN and RAN have similar tribulations, experiences and aspirations. As democracies too, they are not dissimilar; sub-optimal political and bureaucratic grasp of matters military, a nascent MSME eco-system and near non-existent, defence-related R&D and academic support. Furthermore, our unique maritime roles/ commitments and hydrologies preclude induction of off-the-shelf underwater platforms. Finally, both navies are now looking at acquiring SSNs, rightly dubbed as the 'most complex technological machine'. The SSNs operated by India are on lease from Russia and the indigenous Arihant Class are classified as SSBNs. Project 75 Alpha is the indigenous SSN programme, currently at its conceptual stage. It is, therefore, only natural that we learn from each other's experiences, replicate the good practices and avoid the pitfalls.

Australia's Collins Class Experience

At 3,500 tonne submerged displacement, the Collins class is the largest operational diesel – electric submarine in the world. Designed for long range – 1,200nm and endurance of 70 days, they have US weapons (Mk 48 Torpedoes and Harpoon anti -ship missiles), a US Combat Control System, and a French acoustic suite. They do not have land attack capabilities or any significant Special Forces delivery vehicle capability. The boats had major issues relating to sustainability, availability, maintainability as well as operational capability shortfalls. These included unreliable combat system, frequent propulsion machinery failures, high noise levels, high indiscretion rates, implying they must snorkel to charge batteries for prolonged durations and manning issues leading to operational boats being tied up alongside. All these took nearly 20 years to resolve. There are, therefore, major lessons, to be learnt from the Collins programme.

The policy paper on replacements for the WW 2 vintage Oberon Class, articulated two overarching suggestions; the majority, if not all, submarines be constructed in Australia and for this to be viable, the number of boats be increased beyond the six Oberon class.

[Read complete article on Indian Defence Review](#)

Hundreds Flee To Thailand As Rebels Clash With Myanmar Army

Hundreds of people, including many children, have fled a flare-up in fighting between the Myanmar army and an ethnic minority insurgent group, taking refuge across the border in Thailand, the Thai authorities and an aid worker said.

About 700 people had fled to the Thai town of Mae Sot after fighting between the Karen National Union (KNU) and Myanmar's army, the authorities in the western Thai border province of Tak said in a statement.

Mr Ye Min, an official at the Aid Alliance Committee, a Thai-based Myanmar migrants' group, said 2,503 people, including 545 children, were sheltering on the Thai side of the border.

"We are providing food assistance working together with Thai authorities," Mr Ye Min said by telephone, adding that most of the displaced were from Lay Kay Kaw and other villages.

Myanmar was plunged into turmoil when the military ousted a civilian government led by Nobel laureate Aung San Suu Kyi on Feb 1, triggering protests in cities and sporadic clashes in the countryside between anti-junta militia and the army.

There has also been intensified fighting at times between the army and insurgent groups in Myanmar's border areas, such as the KNU, which is Myanmar's oldest rebel force and has been seeking self-determination in a region of about 1.6 million people.

[Read Complete Article on The Straits Times](#)

Taiwan Warns China On Intervening In Its Affairs

The Executive Yuan yesterday told Beijing to stop engaging in cognitive warfare to intervene in Taiwan's internal affairs, as the nation prepares to vote on four referendums tomorrow.

During a news briefing on Wednesday, China's Taiwan Affairs Office (TAO) spokesman Ma Xiaoguang posed 10 questions about what democracy means to the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) government.

Ma accused the DPP of sowing discord in Taiwanese society, suppressing dissidents, manipulating disagreements between different ethnic groups, exaggerating Chinese military threats, and directly or indirectly meddling in Hong Kong's affairs, among other allegations.

In Taipei, Executive Yuan spokesman Lo Ping-cheng said that the allegations are part of China's disinformation campaign.

Aside from posing real threats by sending military aircraft and vessels into areas around Taiwan, China has been waging a cyberwar against Taiwan, Lo told a news conference.

It is ridiculous that China, which is not democratic at all, dares to tell Taiwan what democracy means, he said.

Taiwan is a sovereign nation, he said, telling Beijing to stop interfering in its internal affairs.

As for the government's assessment about the referendum outcome, Lo said that Cabinet members have fully explained the government's position on the four issues and asked people to vote "no."

The referendums, covering issues related to energy transition and international trade relations, are pertinent to Taiwan's development, he said.

The Chinese Nationalist Party's (KMT) attempts to cast the referendums as a vote of confidence about the Cabinet's performance is a false and unnecessary connection, he added.

The government will respect the results of the referendums and take proper action, per the Referendum Act, he said, urging voters aged 18 and above to cast their ballots on time.

[Read Complete Article on The Taipei Times](#)

Russia, India and China (RIC) Summit May Take Place Soon

The summit of Russia, India and China can be held soon, Russian Presidential Aide Yury Ushakov said on Wednesday.

"The topic of cooperation in the Russia-India-China format was addressed," the Kremlin's spokesperson said, summarizing the videoconference meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and President of China Xi Jinping. The leaders "agreed to continue exchanging opinions in this regard and to endeavour to hold the next summit within the RIC framework in the near future," Ushakov added.

"Putin informed Xi Jinping about the visit to New Delhi on December 6 in this context," the Kremlin's spokesperson said.

The last meeting of leaders of the three countries in the RIC format took place in June 2019 on the side-lines of the G20 summit in Osaka.

"The topic of cooperation within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization was also discussed in detail," Ushakov said.

"It was stressed that this is essentially a new kind of international platform, established on the principles of openness, transparency, mutual respect and consideration of the interests and concerns of each other, the presidential aide said.

[Courtesy: Russian news agency](#)

US to Blacklist DJI and Seven Other Chinese Firms

Shares of China's biggest chipmaker and several of its largest pharmaceutical firms sank on Wednesday on fears that Washington will slap investment and export sanctions against more companies.

Wuxi Biologics Cayman Inc. tumbled a record 25% in Hong Kong before paring losses, while Sino Biopharmaceutical Ltd. dropped 5% at the close. Semiconductor Manufacturing International Corp., which is already under sanctions, fell 6.4% on a report that the U.S. is mulling tougher measures.

The proposal that's being examined would tighten the rules on exports to Shanghai-based SMIC, with the U.S. National Security Council set to hold a meeting on Thursday, said people familiar with the matter. The Financial Times also reported that the Biden administration will place more companies on a blacklist, some of which are alleged to be involved in the surveillance of China's Uyghur minorities.

It's not clear why Chinese biotechnology firms will also be on a Commerce Department list.

"It's an extremely painful drop, and until we know more details it's hard for us to take any action," said Lin Cun, a fund manager at Shenzhen Senrui Investment Co. specializing in healthcare, referring to the decline in Chinese pharmaceutical stocks. "All we can do is watch the losses for now."

Chinese drone maker DJI and AI giant Megvii Technology Ltd, which aren't listed, will be added to the blacklist, the FT said, citing people familiar. It also said supercomputing giant Dawning Information Industry Co. or Sugon, and Yitu Technology, will join the Treasury Department's list of sanctioned Chinese military-industrial complex companies on Thursday.

American investors are barred from investing in companies bearing that label. The firms named were already on a separate blacklist that bans them from accessing American technologies.

The moves come days after Washington sanctioned Sense Time Group Inc. over the alleged oppression of Uyghur Muslims in the Xinjiang autonomous region, forcing the AI leader to postpone its Hong Kong IPO. It threatens to escalate tensions between Washington and Beijing, who are tussling over everything from technology supremacy to human rights. ⁱ

Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who is touring Asia this week, criticized China's "aggressive actions" in the region on Tuesday while laying out plans to more closely integrate U.S. allies and security partners.

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Nation is Indebted to: Sri Surendra Singh Laour (Retd Dy SP)

In modern day management teachings, there are many well established theories which talk about honesty, integrity, ethics and so on. One honorary faculty while teaching about these human behaviours to management students in a famous Institute always used to write on board



"You cannot become honest by learning theories; it is you and only you who will decide to be honest or dishonest by your own choice". He used to wrap up the lecture and invite every student to talk about it.

Surinder Singh Laour is a shining human being of such character who served with UP Police.

He was born in 1944 in Daurala village of Aligarh in a rich landlord family. His father was Uday Singh, and mother was Dalel Kaur. After graduation, Surinder Singh appeared for UP Police Inspector's test, and he topped his batch. He joined UP Police on 10 March 1967 in Meerut. He became Inspector in 1983.

Surinder Singh became a legend of Police Force due to his impeccable honesty and soft human approach to tackle any situation. Using coercive means or third-degree approach was unheard in the entire career of this great Policeman.

Wherever he was posted, he became the most respected and loved person. He never favoured or ill-treated anyone, always ensured rule of law and guideline as stipulated in Police manual. Due to these qualities, he was literally worshipped by common man and was known as "BHAGAT JI".

There are many stories of his shining character which became like folklore in Police force.

Once on the direct orders of DG Police of UP who wanted to set the things right, he was posted as Police Inspector of Naka Police Station of Lucknow to improve the image of Police force., (this Police Station was famous as the most sought after posting for earning money). Within no time all illegal activities came to grinding halt in that Police station's jurisdiction. He was strong, even some of his immediate superiors could not get their gratification which was unwritten norm.

Many of senior Police Officers during whose tenure Inspector Surinder Singh Laour was serving, had very high respect for him.

Former DGP Shriram Arun says any policemen must have four qualities i.e., Excellence in his professional work, Honesty, Unblemished character and Overall performance. He further says when he was DIG Meerut range in 1987, he saw Surinder Singh Laour and found that he is perfect policeman with all these qualities.

Also, a famous DGP of UP Police Dr Vikram Singh has all the praise for him. He says he is proud of his subordinate Surinder Singh Laour and has no hesitation in saying that he treats him as his "Guru" due to his excellence in performance of his duties as a policeman from every angle. Dr Singh says he bows his head to hard work, honesty and uncompromising quality for truth of Surinder Singh Laour. He further says, "if I would have been authorised, I would have not hesitated to change word "LAOUR" with LAOUH (Iron) in his name.

Yes, no one can be made HONEST or DISHONEST, it is the person himself who becomes HONEST or DISHONEST. Is there a proof required? No, Look at the life and work of great Dy SP Surinder Singh Laour. He was awarded President's Police Medal while in service.

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