



## Necessary steps to

The provision of health, education and public services

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**Secrets and agents**

The arrest of Julian Assange raises fears about suppression of the right to information.

The arrest of **Julian Assange**, the head of the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks, has renewed a global debate on balancing **freedom of expression (or the right to information)** with considerations towards the national security of a country. After nearly seven years of eluding authorities in the U.S. and the U.K., facing charges related to theft of classified information from government computers, he was dragged out of the Ecuadorian Embassy in London on April 11 following

- This article is about the arrest of Julian Assange, the head of the anti-secrecy website WikiLeaks, on 11th April from Ecuador.
- Ecuador President Lenin Moreno's withdrawal his country's grant of asylum to Mr. Assange, for "repeated violations to international conventions and daily-life protocols".
- Julian's arrest has renewed a global debate on balancing freedom of expression (or the right to information) with considerations towards the national security of a country.
- He is facing charges related to theft of classified information from government computers and sexual assault allegations.

## Necessary steps to ending poverty

The provision of health, education and public services matters more than income support schemes



PULAPRE BALAKRISHNAN

It is by now close to 50 years since Indira Gandhi brought the idea of eradicating poverty into the electoral arena in India. 'Garibi Hatao' had been her slogan. She actually took the country some distance in the promised direction. Though it had not come close

Parties and schemes

In the run-up to the elections now, schemes guaranteeing income to the poor through budgetary transfers have been announced by both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress. Actually, the BJP's Pradhan Mantri Kisan

What is needed

In light of a pitch that has been made for the implementation in India of a publicly-funded universal basic income (UBI) scheme, we can say that from the perspective of eliminating poverty, universal basic services (UBS) from public sources are needed, though not



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## A tale of two manifestos

The Congress has a deeper understanding of India's security challenges than the BJP does



RADHA KUMAR

National security has rarely been a poll issue. But, thanks to Masood Azhar, it has become one in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections, since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), has made the Pulwama attack and Balakot retaliation central to its campaign. The BJP manifesto opens with national security, under the

termining postings in insurgency-af- cism over Balakot was equally

- This article is about the manifestos released by Congress and BJP and the inclusion of "National Security" in the manifestos of both the parties.
- The BJP manifesto proclaims zero tolerance for terrorism, which, it says, means giving the security forces a free hand to counter it.
- The Congress manifesto also talks of countering terrorism but appears to have a far more professional approach.
- The most significant difference between the two manifestos is the BJP's inclusion of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) as a security measure, along with revocation of Article 370.
- The Congress manifesto deals with the troubled States of both the North-West and North-East as issues of conflict resolution, not national security.

## Highway hurdle

The verdict on the Chennai-Salem corridor reveals the perils of fast-tracking projects

The Madras High Court verdict quashing land acquisition proceedings for the proposed Chennai-Salem greenfield expressway is an indictment of the arbitrary decision-making process behind the project.

This is a political setback to the fast-track project. Chief Minister Edappadi to which he went to and protests against it. T "peaceful protests were promulgated, [and] die the peaceful protes to spare them and their court intervened that "th sided". It invalidated the quire land for the project al Highways Authority of without complying with

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interference in the two manifestos' approach towards terrorism and civil conflict. The BJP manifesto proclaims zero tolerance for terrorism, which, it says, means giving the security forces a free hand to counter it. This claim appears overstated. Ordinarily, giving the security forces a free hand would entail the Army preparing a blueprint for the government to ap been edge, exist. s are ven- in for- country is that secur- their ot fa- cades l and -t..-..

- This article is about the Madras High Court verdict on the land acquisition proceedings for the proposed Chennai-Salem greenfield expressway.
- The court has referred to how "peaceful protests were stifled, unwritten gag orders were promulgated, [and] police force was used to handle the peaceful protesters who were making a request to spare them and their lands".
- The court said the National Highways Authority of India cannot acquire land without complying with the requirement of preparing an environment impact assessment report.
- The court also added that the eight-lane corridor was never really cleared as a project under the Centre's Bharatmala Pariyojana. It did not figure in the list of road projects approved under Bharatmala-1.

## VOCABULARY

**Eradicated (v2/v3/adj+)** जड़ से मिटाना, abolish

Several malpractices were eradicated from the society.

**Tantamount (adj+)** बराबर, equal

Not taking action against injustice is tantamount to negligence of duty.

**Insurmountable (adj+)** अजेय, unconquerable

There are insurmountable difficulties in ensuring equal opportunities for all pupils.

**Palliative (adj/n+)** शान्ति देनेवाला, soothing, sedative

orthodox medicines tend to be palliative rather than curative.

**Imprudent (adj-)** असावधान, unwise, incautious

The banks were imprudent in making the loans.

**Requisite (adj+)** अपेक्षित, required

The application will not be processed until the requisite fee is paid.

**Wherewithal (n+)** मनी, धन

She had the wherewithal to buy anything which took her fancy.

**Discernible (adj+)** प्रत्यक्ष, obvious

The scandal had no discernible effect on his career.

**Alleviating (v4/adj+)** कम करना, reduce

The medicine e couldn't prevent her pain, only alleviate it.

**Surged (v2/v3/adj+)** लहर उठना, rush, stream

Contaminated water surged into people's homes.

### 7 Facts (Ecuador)

1. Landlocked Country ?
2. Latitudes - C E C ?
3. President- Lenin Moreno
4. PM -
5. Capital - Quito
6. Currency - United States Dollar
7. Continent- South America
8. Neighboring countries ?



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### Necessary steps to ending poverty

- It is by now close to 50 years since Indira Gandhi brought the idea of eradicating poverty into the electoral arena in India. 'Garibi Hatao' had been her slogan. So, if there had been a focus on poverty even 50 years ago, why have we not seen it end?
- This is because the approach of public policy to the problem has been to initiate schemes which could serve as no more than a palliative, as suggested by the very term 'poverty alleviation' commonly used in the discourse of this time.
- These schemes failed to go to the root of poverty, which is capability deprivation that leaves an individual unable to earn sufficient income through work or entrepreneurship.

- In the run-up to the elections now, schemes guaranteeing income to the poor through budgetary transfers have been announced by both the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and the Congress.
- Actually, the BJP's Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-Kisan), paying farm households below a threshold ₹6,000 a year, is already in place. We can think of agricultural labourers and urban pavement dwellers as equally deserving of support as poor farmers.
- The PM-Kisan has, however, been dwarfed by the promise of the Nyuntam Aay Yojana (NYAY) of the Congress, which envisages an annual transfer 12 times greater to the poorest 20% households. While this scheme is not discriminatory, it is severely challenged by the issue of beneficiary identification in real time.
- It is estimated to cost ₹3.6 lakh crore per annum at current prices. This comes to approximately 13% of the central budgetary outlay for 2019-20. But the point is that at 13% of outlay, NYAY would amount to more than twice the combined expenditure on health and education and more than capital expenditure in the same budget, they being the items of public expenditure that most impact poverty in the long run.

So, for the implementation of a publicly-funded universal basic income (UBI) scheme in India, we can say that, universal basic services (UBS) from public sources are needed, though not necessarily financed through the budget.

- The original case for a UBI came from European economists. This is not entirely surprising. Europe is perhaps saturated with publicly provided UBS. Also the state in some of its countries is immensely wealthy. So if a part of the public revenues is paid out as basic income, the project of providing public services there will not be affected.

#### Capital and Currencies

- Columbia- Bogotá, Colombian peso
- Peru- Lima, Sol
- Brazil- Brasília, Brazilian real
- Venezuela- Caracas
- Venezuelan bolívar, Sovereign Bolivar
- Chile- Santiago, Chilean peso
- Bolivia- Sucre, Bolivian boliviano

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