

PEACE OVER TERRORISM

Punishing Pakistan for sponsoring terrorism by snapping ties with it is not warmongering. It means the government of the day is serious about sending a message that Islamabad must mean its ways or face the consequences. It means the government of the day cares about its people and forces, who are on the target of terrorists. It also means that government is committed to uprooting terrorism in all forms. In the middle of this strategy, why would a group of self styled peace nicks create a pressure group asking India and Pakistan to resume talks? Either the signatories are playing a mischief or they are genuinely cut off from the mainstream and live in their ivory towers. The initiative is reportedly led by a peace activist who had been associated with Kashmir. His effort at changing something is as old as Pakistan's anti-India games; He had never furnished anything tangible in terms of peace. While making efforts for peace is a good, but understanding that peace and terrorism do not go together is equally important.

It's after so long a time that a government in New Delhi finally has a realistic Pakistan policy which is not based on romanticism and avoidance of a conflict. And this is working. Islamabad today is rattled by India utilizing all waters that used to flow to it despite it raising nurseries of terrorists. It's faced with severe economic crisis that could be solved in a jiffy if it deals with India as a genuine neighbor and not as a fanatic Islamic state. At this stage who would love disruption of the policy? Obviously it is Pakistan. So, for whom this lobby is working? If these people have a say let them prevail upon Pakistan's civil society to pressurize their government to end sponsoring terrorism. It will be a service to the people of India and Pakistan.

Shiv Sena @60: Can it survive another split

Kalyani Shankar

As the Shiv Sena completed six decades of its turbulent political journey on June 19, the party found itself confronting yet another split — its fifth major split in six decades. The crisis raises fundamental questions about leadership, succession, ideology and the future of both the Thackeray family and Maharashtra's regional politics.

Last week, on June 19, the Shiv Sena marked its 60th anniversary. Since its inception, in the past 60 years, the party has experienced several splits, with the latest occurring on June 26. Shiv Sena's 60th anniversary is contested by two factions—Thackeray's Sena (UBT) and Eknath Shinde's Sena—each claiming the party's original ideological legacy.

On June 26, a significant political rift emerged within the Uddhav Thackeray-led Shiv Sena (UBT) when six of its nine Lok Sabha MPs defected to join Eknath Shinde's ruling Shiv Sena faction. This sudden defection severely undermined Uddhav Thackeray's group, reducing its representation in the Lok Sabha to just three members and bolstering the Shinde faction's parliamentary strength.

The ongoing political contest across Parliament, courts, and streets underscores the urgency for strategic responses. In its 60 years, the Shiv Sena has split five times, highlighting its vulnerability to internal divisions and the need for effective management of such conflicts.

Just before the party founder, Bal Thackeray, named his son, Uddhav, as the Sena executive president in 2003, senior party leaders had begun pressing for a key organisational role for him. Later, Uddhav's son Aaditya Thackeray's elevation in the Sena followed a similar trajectory, with party leaders projecting him as its "gen-next" face before he was appointed the Yuva Sena chief.

On November 28, 2019, Uddhav Thackeray, leader of the Shiv Sena and head of



the Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA), was sworn in as Maharashtra's Chief Minister, marking a key leadership milestone amid ongoing political shifts. The MVA is an alliance between the Shiv Sena, the Nationalist Congress Party, and the Indian National Congress.

On June 21, 2022, Eknath Shinde, the leader of the Shiv Sena in the Legislative Assembly, went missing with several other MLAs. This 'rebel' group initially moved to Surat and then to Guwahati, claiming that the MVA alliance contradicted the Shiv Sena's ideology and expressing a lack of confidence in CM Thackeray.

After the 2022 split, 40 of the 56 Shiv Sena MLAs sided with Shinde, while 16 remained with Thackeray. In the Lok Sabha, 13 of 18 MPs joined the Shinde camp, leaving just five with Uddhav. Both factions claim to be the rightful heirs to Bal Thackeray's political legacy, with Uddhav emphasising his bloodline and Shinde arguing that he upholds the party's ideological foundation.

The manner in which the Shiv Sena split is reminiscent of past political events, such as the fragmentation of the NCP and the ongoing issues facing the TMC. This trend is concerning. Sharad Pawar has even re-

marked that several regional parties may merge with Congress in the coming years.

The latest split in Shiv Sena UBT raises important questions about the future of the Thackeray clan. It could unfold in several ways: Dissent among the rebel leaders has been growing due to their dissatisfaction with Thackeray's leadership. They believe he has not engaged with them enough, particularly by failing to visit their constituencies despite their requests for support.

Senior Sena leaders credit Shinde's son, Shrikant, with playing a "central role" in bringing six Uddhav Sena MPs into the party fold and increasing its bargaining power vis-à-vis the BJP.

To navigate the challenges following the split and ensure the survival and resurgence of the Uddhav faction, several strategic actions could be considered:

There is an urgent need to resolve grievances and restore unity and confidence among supporters.

If the faction fails to acknowledge divides and shifting public sentiments, they risk losing influence in the future.

Supporting credible and reliable leaders can inspire confidence, attract new supporters, and energise the existing base

Focusing on key issues such as employment, education, and infrastructure can empower supporters and garner their backing.

Outreach initiatives and campaigns addressing local issues can foster trust and a sense of shared purpose.

Leveraging cultural heritage and engaging in social activities can reinforce regional identity and goodwill among the public.

Being responsive to changing political sentiments and the expectations of younger generations is crucial for maintaining relevance.

Fostering internal cohesion is crucial during this period. Swiftly resolving internal conflicts and creating an inclusive environment can inspire hope and a shared sense of responsibility among supporters, strengthening party unity and resilience.

By implementing these strategies, the Uddhav faction can survive and potentially regain influence in Maharashtra's politics. However, if they fail to address internal divisions and adapt to changing public opinions, they may struggle to remain relevant.

Neither faction is electorally self-sufficient: Shinde relies on the BJP's machinery, while Uddhav depends on the MVA's combined vote share.

Therefore, the upcoming IHG assembly election will be a true test of which faction of the Shiv Sena survives.

Ultimately, the outcome depends largely on their strategic decisions and their ability to respond to the evolving political landscape in Maharashtra. The choices they make will be pivotal for the future of the Thackeray family and the party.

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The writer is a popular columnist; Views presented are personal.

'JAPA' (CHANTING) IS THE ULTIMATE MANTRA TO PLEASE GOD

Ajit Kumar Bishnoi

I am stating this fact with full conviction, which is based on scriptural evidences and my personal experiences. Please sample these from the Bhagavad-Gita. Lord Krishna states, "I am chanting among the yajnas (sacrifices)." (10.25) And what is the greatest sacrifice? It is to chant God's names by giving up 'ahankar' (false ego). What was standing in between the bounden duty of Arjuna - a kshatriya and leaving the battlefield, as decided by him at the beginning of the conversation with Lord Krishna. (1.43) Arjuna's ahankar was the cause, as pointed out by the Lord to him. (18.58) And what warning was given by the Lord to Arjuna? "If you will not heed on account of your ahankar, you will perish." (18.58)

What is our problem generally in giving up our ahankar? This is being self-centred with "I, I, I," or "mein, mein, mein" have done this or that. We identify ourselves with our nature, which is dominated by false ego. Where does it lead to? Yes, perishing, which, unfortunately, is where one ends up. What should we do then? Exactly what Arjuna agreed to do, which was: I shall follow Your (God's) instructions."



(18.73)

What are Lord's instructions, which will please Him? "Take My shelter only." (18.66) Why? "Lord Vasudeva is everything." (7.19) "Not of anyone else", is the instruction in the verse #9.22. It must be, "In all respects take God's shelter only." (18.62) "Develop My consciousness", is the instruction in the verse #18.65. This way one will remain in shelter of God by the

mind and the intelligence. (12.8)

And this is the most perfect way to please God, which will entitle one to all kinds of benefits. Give up ahankar like Arjuna did. What did Arjuna get? Lord Krishna assured him of enjoying the kingdom (2.37 and 11.33). Additionally, Arjuna was assured of opulences, victory, wealth and definite principles. (18.78) What has Lord Krishna promised us? "I will help in get-

ting what you do not have and provide security of what you have? (9.22) Personally speaking, I have given up my ahankar and I go Krishna, Krishna, Krishna..... and God has become karta (doer) in my life. I am assured of success in whatever I take up under God's guidance. My life is going on smoothly, much beyond my wildest imagination. Who are my role models? I will begin with Lord Shiva. I have put His large photo in my bedroom. What is the Lord doing? Yes, chanting. The next big inspiration comes from Hanumanji, who pleased Lord Ramachandra by his chanting: Rama, Rama, Rama..... Adi Shankaracharya exhorted us to: "bhaja Govindam".

Mother Ahilya should not be forgotten, who kept on chanting Rama, Rama, Rama.....till the Lord liberated her. Draupadi completes my list, who prayed to Lord Krishna to save her from the ultimate humiliation by chanting: Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.....

In conclusion, please give up ahankar and get started with any: Rama, Rama, Rama..... or Krishna, Krishna, Krishna.... or Shiva, Shiva, Shiva..... or Ohm, Ohm, Ohm..... (8.13) Getting started is all-important; God takes care of the rest.

QUAD: A Boost for India's swadeshi strategy

T Senthil Siva Subramanian

21st century is a technological and economic era for cooperation, and alliances, thereby opening new platforms and opportunities to strengthen global growth. Countries around the world are navigating and exploring possibilities for cross functional collaboration to enhance investment which results in pronounced innovation and infrastructure, safe economic trade and secure commerce that will lead to enhance GDP.

India duly recognizes and respects the policy initiatives of global countries and stand by to provide hand-holding/committed support to global countries at various instances which includes the COVID-19 crisis. Global leaders eye on India as we have strong ease of governance and ease of doing business, robust Swadeshi policy frameworks which forms eminent pillars for our nation's economic growth. India is spearheading in a variety of significant sectors that includes agriculture (Food security), energy security, defence systems, nuclear, semiconductor, quantum, telecom [5G and 6G] and a special focus on critical

minerals, which include mineral processing, recycling, and smart waste management.

India's strong network and covalent bonding relationship with international countries as it is clearly visible and evident through the historic international visits by our Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi forms a big backbone that invites enormous global investments and exchange of trade and commerce. QUAD-A strong framework initiative that covers and addresses maritime, critical minerals, new-age frontier technologies, health care which includes biomanufacturing (devices and pharmaceutical) and additional focus on disaster relief valuing human assistance. QUAD's mission will enhance economic Indo-Pacific energy security and market supply chain and logistics across the nations through common goals and shared resources. One of the most important initiative frameworks was QUAD Critical minerals which will open doors for cross critical mineral sharing among the QUAD countries that will boost and great push for many potential applications which includes automotive-



Electrical Vehicle segment and defence security.

The main motto of QUAD is to have self-growth and growth of planets worldwide through shared common goals. QUAD, a new format and charged beginning in this emerging era for "like: Unified-Goal-minded countries" to harness and leverage the potential of natural resources and talent / skills available worldwide that could serve as a catalyst for the economic growth of nation across the globe. QUAD-Open new avenues and platforms for our nation that will boost economic trade and commerce

excellence, research and innovation parks, Atal tinkering labs, revamped Industrial Training Institute (ITI)s as Centre of Excellence, industrial clusters, parks and corridors, technology centre, enhanced MSME clusters, startup eco systems and unicorns, smart cities along with significant boost in variety of economic parameters that includes smart manufacturing without compromising on productivity and quality measures achieved through Zero Defect Zero Effect (ZED), global supply chain and significant focus on economic packaging. India has created a value chain for its home-grown products as these are indigenously developed by Indian industries / MSME believing on Swadeshi / Vocal for Local Formula

QUAD emerged as open-door platform for global countries to eye on significant sectors such as energy security, critical minerals and pointed focus on maritime surveillance that would enhance cross-country trade, secured and safe commerce among QUAD nations. QUAD will give a great push for our nation's critical mission, national green hydrogen mission, and semiconductor mission as well. Addi-

tionally, the QUAD has special focus and unified approach on creating opportunities to open seaports like in Fiji that will enormously increase the exchange of trade and commerce across the countries that will add glory to economic policies and prosperities worldwide. India and global countries are intensively working to develop port infrastructure across Indo-Pacific cross corridors having a significant importance to open port in Fiji.

The tangible outcomes resulted in creating unique initiatives and formation of Indo-Pacific Maritime Surveillance Corporation among the four countries to create a real-time maritime awareness and equivalently sharing maritime information. Through QUAD, countries are at ease and comfort to share their valuable information on collective agreement through user-friendly formats. India has been strongly working to create a global HUB for maritime called as Information Fusion Centre - Indian Ocean Region in short called as IFC-IOR located in Gurugram acts as fusion among QUAD countries actively working to achieve common and shared goals.