

NONE IS ABOVE LAW

No individual or party is above the law of the land and especially the Apex Court. One wonders what is behind so called “The Cockroach Janata Party’s justification in threatening to wage yet another agitation, this time against Supreme Court’s interim order permitting the Police to file the FIRs and carry out investigations based on the FIRs filed against those who indulged in criminal activities during the recent Delhi protest against the leak of NEET papers. The CJP, which actually is not even a party at this stage, claims it’s not what the government had agreed to with them. The reality is that even the government is not above the law. Evidence of criminals infiltrating the protests which may have started as a genuine protest by the students has surfaced. It’s natural for the Police to investigate the links between the protesters and the criminals, their funding and those holding the apron strings of the agitation from far off. Even on social media one saw ‘protesters’ assaulting the policemen on duty, damaging public property and then on top of it using cuss words and indecent language against the leaders of the country. The students have to be set apart from criminals in the protests. Genuine people should not have any fear of the FIRs and police investigations. The criminals and paid agents of anti-India forces have to be brought to the book. By the way CJP is neither a political party nor does it have the mandate of the people to rule of govern this country leave alone dictate terms to the Supreme Court. Police and the government of the day are responsible for maintaining peace and law and order in this country. India is the fastest growing country in the world and we can’t afford anarchy and chaos. Protests are fine in a democracy and the CJP has had its fill. The students can now move on with their lives and leave the governance to the state institutions.

The CJP and the new face of youth dissent

Kalyani Shankar

The Cockroach Janata Party (CJP), born out of outrage over alleged examination paper leaks and fuelled by a derogatory remark about unemployed youth, transformed public anger into a nationwide campaign for accountability.

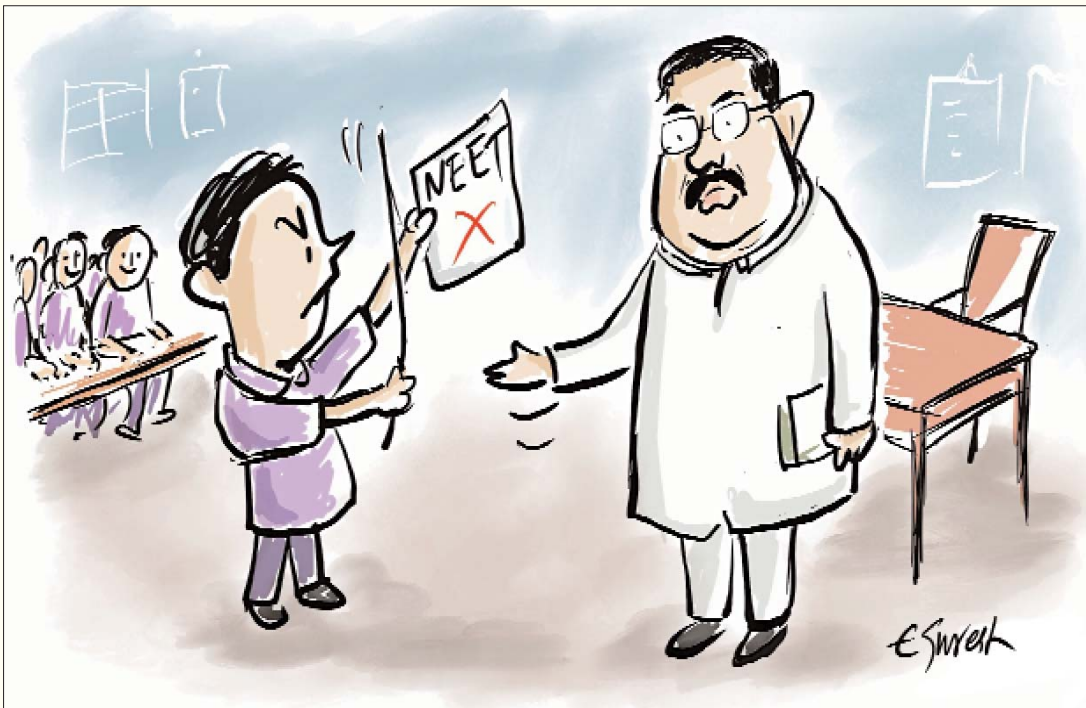
Since its inception in May, the Cockroach Janata Party (CJP) has emerged as a notable movement, capturing the attention of many individuals and opposition groups. It has become a key voice of dissent among India’s youth, challenging the government on various issues.

The CJP has gained momentum and inspired many people, highlighting its importance in Indian politics. It stands out as one of the most prominent youth movements in India, representing public protests against the government.

The protests, called the “cockroach” protests, began in response to claims about leaks in important entrance exams for medical colleges and government jobs. Initially focused on these specific exams, the movement soon expanded into broader agitation.

Now, it includes not just the students directly affected but also professionals, parents, and everyday citizens who share frustrations about economic and social challenges in the country.

The name of the movement stems from a comment made by the Chief Justice of India, who compared unemployed youth to cockroaches. The CJP took this insult and turned it into a rallying cry for young people. Activist Sonam Wangchuk joined the protests, branding himself as an



“honorary cockroach”. He even went on a 26-day hunger strike in New Delhi to peacefully raise awareness. In a video from his hospital bed, he said he received a written assurance that the government would address accountability in the exam system and that no legal action would be taken against the young people participating in the protests.

The movement is calling for the resignation of Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, as well as demanding reforms in the exam system to prevent future leaks. They are also seeking compensation for students affected by these issues, highlighting their desire for real change. Prime Minister Modi has announced that special courts will be established to deal with those responsible for exam paper leaks, which is his first official response to the controversy. He emphasised on social media that the well-being of the youth is a top

priority.

The CJP was founded by Abhijeet Dipke, who was motivated to act after hearing the Chief Justice’s insulting remarks about unemployed youth. He humorously posed the question on social media, “What if all cockroaches came together?”

Public protests have intensified as more allegations of exam leaks have come to light. These exams are crucial for job opportunities and social mobility in India, and any threat to their integrity could lead to significant delays and stress for students who fear losing precious study time. IndiaNews Portal

The CJP’s independence from traditional political parties fosters trust and pride in grassroots efforts, inspiring hope that youth can create meaningful change through social media and community actions.

The protests reveal a growing public mistrust in major institu-

tions, such as schools, politicians, the judicial system, and the media. People are demanding urgent systemic changes to restore confidence in these entities, emphasising the need for collective action and responsibility.

What began as online satire has transformed into a robust expression of youth frustration. Following a police crackdown that injured many demonstrators, public outcry increased. Political opponents have echoed the movement’s demands during parliamentary sessions.

Some Bollywood celebrities, who faced criticism for staying silent on these protests, spoke out in support of the students’ collective action, praising their bravery without directly criticising the government. This includes Aamir Khan, Priyanka Chopra, and Salman Khan. While Prime Minister Modi hasn’t directly addressed the protests, his acknowledgement of the exam

leak issue indicates awareness of the movement’s concerns, and the CJP’s continued call for Minister Pradhan’s resignation underscores its ongoing activism and importance in Indian politics.

A protester pointed out that Modi appeared under pressure, highlighting the need for him to take decisive action, including removing his education minister. Opposition leaders, including Rahul Gandhi and his sister Priyanka, held a protest outside Modi’s residence, as their party shared in videos. Other leaders like Mamata Banerjee and Kejriwal were also critical of the government.

After Wangchuk concluded his hunger strike, Dipke expressed gratitude for Wangchuk’s inspiring leadership.

The climax came when Pradhan resigned on Saturday. The CJP was shouting, “We have won.” Their crowd at Jantar Mantar was dispersed quickly.

Can the government do more to pacify the demonstrators? Is this the right action at the wrong time? The movement has no ties to political parties and no specific ideology. This was an advantage for the CJP. The government needs to handle this carefully because even some BJP members are concerned about NEET. We will need to watch how this situation develops in the coming months.

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

THE TRIANGLE THAT HOLDS US TOGETHER

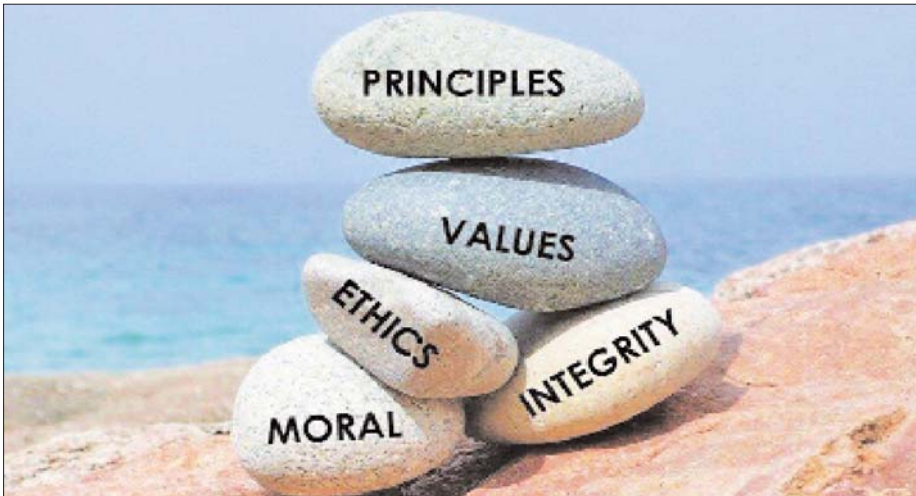
Rachna Lakhpati

We spend a great deal of time talking about people. Their behaviour, their intentions, their failures and their choices. Entire conversations, sometimes entire careers, are built around decoding why people do what they do. And yet, for all that analysis, we keep arriving at the same impasses in workplaces, families, friendships and public life.

Perhaps because we are asking the wrong question. The real conversation isn’t about people in isolation. It is about the space between them, the invisible architecture that either holds relationships together or quietly dismantles them. That architecture has three pillars: relationships, truth and ethics. And the moment any one of them weakens, everything built on top of it begins to tilt.

Consider how often we have watched this play out. A team that works beautifully together, bound by warmth and years of shared history, but where a crucial truth was never spoken. The silence feels protective at first.

Then it festers. By the time it surfaces, the relationship that was meant to be pro-



tested has already been hollowed out. The truth, delayed, does more damage than it would have if it had simply been said. Or consider the opposite scenario. Someone who speaks truth like a blunt instrument, proud of their honesty, indifferent to the wreckage it leaves behind. Technically accurate. Ethically questionable. Relationally destructive. Truth without care is not virtue. It is just candour dressed up as courage.

Then there is ethics, perhaps the most misunderstood of the three. Ethics, in practice, is not a rulebook. It is a calibration. It asks: what is the right thing to do, given who is involved, what is at stake and what it will cost? Ethics without relationship is cold and often unjust. Ethics without truth is a performance. But ethics grounded in both, in genuine regard for the other person and in honest assessment of the situation, is the closest thing we have

to wisdom.

The trouble is that most of us were never taught to hold all three at once. We were taught to be loyal, which sometimes meant staying quiet. Or to be honest, which sometimes meant being unkind. Or to be principled, which sometimes meant being rigid. Each virtue, taught in isolation, contains the seed of its own distortion.

What life actually requires is the ability to move between them, to know when a relationship needs the protection of a difficult truth, when truth needs the tempering of ethical consideration, and when ethics must take precedence even if it strains the relationship. None of the three can be permanently sacrificed for the other two without something essential being lost.

This is not a comfortable thought. Balance rarely is. It demands attention, judgement and the willingness to sit with complexity rather than reach for the nearest easy answer.

But the alternative, choosing one and abandoning the rest, is precisely how most of our messes get made. The triangle holds, or it doesn’t. And that depends entirely on whether we are willing to tend to all three sides.

The road to Viksit Bharat must not be paved with blood

Abhinav Narayan Jha |
Abhay Kumar

Every road crash leaves behind more than twisted metal and shattered glass — it leaves grieving parents, orphaned children, unfinished dreams and irreversible loss. Yet, despite technological advancement, stricter laws and expanding highways, road accidents continue to claim hundreds of lives every day. India is not merely facing a transport crisis; it is confronting a public health emergency, a governance challenge and a collective failure of civic responsibility. Indian-Market Analysis

The latest Road Accidents in India 2024 Report, released by the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), paints a disturbing picture. India witnessed approximately 4.8 lakh road accidents, leading to over 1.77 lakh deaths and more than 4.6 lakh injuries during the year. On average, 485 people lose their lives every day, while nearly 1,300 people are injured daily on Indian roads. These figures place India among the countries with

the highest number of road fatalities globally. Overspeeding alone accounted for over 70 per cent of all road deaths, while hit-and-run cases contributed to nearly one-fifth of all fatalities. Non-use of helmets resulted in over 54,000 deaths, whereas failure to wear seat belts caused more than 14,000 fatalities. Nearly 10 per cent of accidents involved drivers without a valid driving licence or holding only a learner’s licence, exposing glaring gaps in enforcement and licensing. These statistics are not merely numbers—they represent human lives that could have been saved through better planning, stricter enforcement and greater public awareness.

The crisis is equally alarming from a global perspective. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), nearly 1.19 million people die annually due to road traffic crashes across the world, while 20-50 million people suffer non-fatal injuries, many resulting in permanent disabilities. Road traffic injuries remain the leading cause of death among children and

young adults aged 5-29 years. Alarming, 92 per cent of global road fatalities occur in low- and middle-income countries, despite these nations possessing only around 60 per cent of the world’s vehicles. More than half of all victims are vulnerable road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. Recognising this growing challenge, the United Nations declared 2021-2030 as the Second Decade of Action for Road Safety, setting an ambitious target of reducing global road deaths and injuries by 50 per cent before 2030. Achieving this objective demands stronger political commitment, scientific road engineering, efficient emergency response systems and behavioural transformation among road users.

In India, road safety has received increasing legislative attention. The Motor Vehicles (Amendment) Act, 2019, significantly enhanced penalties for dangerous driving, drunken driving, juvenile driving, overloading, driving without a licence and violations relating to hel-

metts and seat belts. More recently, the introduction of Section 106(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023 (BNS), has further strengthened accountability in serious hit-and-run cases. The provision prescribes enhanced punishment where a driver, after causing death by negligent driving, escapes the scene without informing the police or other competent authorities. The legislative intent is clear—to discourage offenders from abandoning accident victims and to reinforce the legal duty to report accidents promptly. However, the effectiveness of Section 106(2) should not be measured solely by the severity of punishment. Criminal law is essentially reactive; it intervenes after lives have already been lost. The true success of road safety lies not in convictions but in prevention. Fear of punishment cannot replace disciplined driving, safe infrastructure and effective enforcement. IndianMarket Analysis

India has nevertheless undertaken several commendable policy initiatives in recent years.

The Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has accelerated the identification and rectification of accident-prone “black spots”, promoted Intelligent Traffic Management Systems, strengthened vehicle safety standards through mandatory crash tests, encouraged electronic enforcement of traffic violations and implemented the Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR) for faster insurance settlements and better accident analysis. The Government has also institutionalised Good Samaritan Guidelines, protecting citizens who voluntarily assist accident victims from unnecessary legal harassment, thereby encouraging timely medical intervention during the critical “golden hour”.

Recent policy discussions indicate that repeat traffic offenders may soon be required to undergo fresh driving tests while renewing their licences. Simultaneously, reforms are being considered to enable Motor Accident Claims Tribunals (MACTs) to grant interim compensation to crash victims and their families

without waiting for prolonged litigation. These reforms reflect a welcome shift from merely punishing offenders towards protecting victims and improving compliance. Yet, legislation alone cannot overcome decades of unsafe road behaviour. India’s road safety problem is deeply rooted in human conduct. Overspeeding, distracted driving caused by mobile phone usage, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs, fatigue among commercial drivers, lane discipline, signal jumping and disregard for pedestrian rights continue to account for the overwhelming majority of crashes. Every traffic violation is a conscious choice that endangers not only the driver but every innocent road user.

Infrastructure also requires urgent attention. National Highways constitute only a small proportion of India’s total road network, yet they account for a disproportionately high share of fatalities because of excessive speeds and inadequate safety measures. Many urban roads lack proper footpaths, pedes-

trian crossings, cycling infrastructure, street lighting, traffic-calming measures and scientifically designed intersections. Rural roads frequently suffer from poor signage, inadequate markings and delayed emergency response services. Road engineering must shift from facilitating faster movement to ensuring safer mobility for all. Road safety is equally an economic issue. Every fatal accident imposes enormous costs through medical expenditure, productivity losses, insurance claims, litigation and long-term social support for affected families. The economic burden runs into billions of rupees annually, making road safety not merely a welfare concern but a developmental necessity. Education and awareness must therefore become central pillars of national policy. Road safety should be introduced as a compulsory component of school and university curricula. Driver training should prioritise defensive driving, hazard perception and emergency response rather than merely passing licensing examinations.