

INDIA, PAKISTAN AND IWT

What can Pakistan do to make India reverse its decision to suspend the Indus Water Treaty that regulates the sharing of waters between the two neighbour? Practically nothing! Let’s see the fact. The water of six rivers from Punjab and J&K flows into Pakistan. After Pakistan became an independent country in 1947, India offered the IWT, as a assign of goodwill to it. Under the treaty, the water of three eastern rivers would be utilized by India while that of three other by Pakistan. It meant that India would not store the waters of the three rivers – Chenab, Jhelum and Sind – it could store on the other three. Pakistan had no role to play because its storage would not impact India. So, overall, the IWT was a treaty favouring Pakistan. It’s another matter that Islamabad never bothered to make use of this waters either for building dams or generating power.

However, Islamabad chose to declare India as enemy. Instead of pursuing good and normal relations with India, it decided to send terrorists and arms to India for waging a proxy war. India chose to play the game by rule book till the Narendra Modi government took charge of the country and after trying to woo Islamabad in vain, the government declared blood and water can not flow together. Other than threatening Pakistan and giving a clear message that it would have to pay a heavy price for sponsoring terrorism in India, Modi government swung into action and completed dams, hydropower stations on the rivers flowing into Pakistan. There is no way any country can place a lid on the mouth of a river and stop its flow. The Modi government simply discharged its responsibilities to its people. The fact is that India always had the power to regulate flow of water to Pakistan. Islamabad has to be mindful of this, always. India will normalize its relations with Pakistan only after it ends terrorism and shows tangible proof of it.

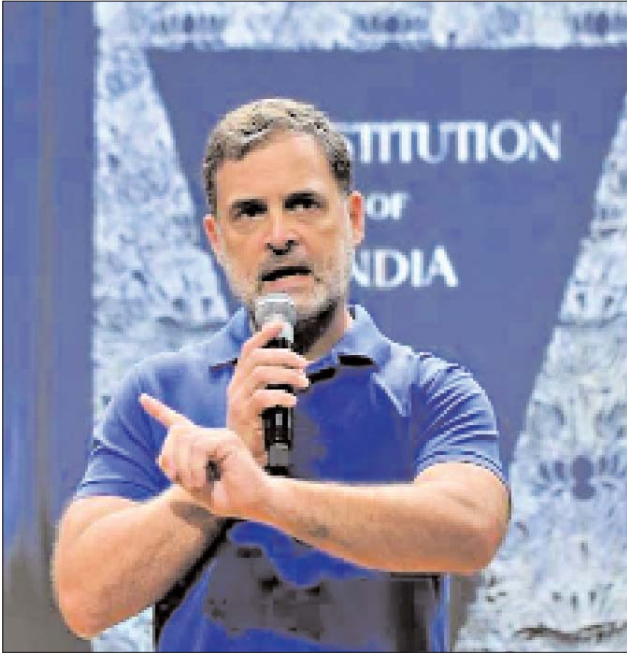
Anil Anand

A proactive leader on the solo march and an inertia-ridden organisation refusing to shrug off its lethargy. If it is an interesting phenomenon, it is more dichotomous that has landed Congress - the Grand Old Party (GOP) - in a bind. Not the political rivals but the party's top leadership should take the blame for this confusion and for showing no hurry to extricate themselves from this situation.

There is no doubt that Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi is a man on the march. From a reluctant player, during his first two terms as Lok Sabha MP and in between becoming Congress president, he has come a long way to become proactive, impressively and daringly raising political and societal issues. And above all, managing to establish a connect with the younger generation, or Gen Z, who have steadfastly stood behind Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the last one decade. Squatting on a dharna outside Parliament Street Police Station in support of a pellet-injury-hit youth is the latest in the series of steps in this direction.

The contrast between Gandhi's high-profile individual outreach and the perception of a sluggish Congress party stems from deep structural decay, heavy reliance on a top-down (mostly defunct) leadership model, and disconnected regional hierarchies. When high-visibility campaigns fail to translate into organised local momentum, it exposes a disconnect between national optics and ground-level execution. This has repeatedly happened, but there is no attempt to learn lessons and set the house in order.

Despite his sensible interventions and thoughtful suggestions on vital national and international issues, Gandhi gives an impression of still being a loner in the GOP's vast spread all over the country. That is strange enough. But why so? Does he himself need to reflect or change his approach towards the organisation by shrugging off indecisiveness? Shouldn't he adopt



a proactive approach to set the party and its leaders right, as he has been doing in his solo efforts? Firstly, he must follow the dictum suggested by none other than Gandhi himself. Pick up the right person for the right job with a strong rider of accountability. He needs to do this in the light of his observation that the party has been putting up the racing horse on the job to pull a cart and vice versa. Even before that, while on a visit to Gujarat, he had spoken about the BJP sleeper cells active in the state Congress (that scenario prevails in many states and Union Territories) and the need for heads to roll. It has been months now, but the follow-up action is still to come. The BJP and regional parties' sleeper cells are thriving all over the Congress network.

An immediate follow-up action on such counts would have given Gandhi a decisive edge and created deterrence, thereby making it easier for him to tone up the organisation. Indecisiveness has portrayed his weakness; this attitude has emboldened those becoming roadblocks for the party to act more vigorously in internal sabotage.

Indecision, reluctance to take hard decisions and the tendency to protect even the “failed horses” under the garb of being favourites of someone have become the Congress's bane. It is hard to believe that Gandhi and other leaders are not aware of this malady. What is intriguing is that they are knowingly allowing such a situation to prevail at a greater cost not only to the party but to the nation as well, as it weakens the position of the country's main premier opposition party in the overall democratic context.

A strong reason behind Gandhi's “loner status” is that leaders around him in the AICC and PCCs have found a convenient way to shrug off their responsibilities and justify inaction by seeking refuge under the leader's umbrella. “Rahul Gandhi naraz ho jayen ge (Rahul Gandhi will get annoyed)” is their usual refrain to justify not taking a decision in any particular situation. For instance, how could it be justified that it takes months, sometimes years, to make organisational changes at the AICC or the PCCs level? It is criminal negligence; firstly, a non-performing leader is allowed to continue and, secondly, the organisational set-up is given to him/her at a time when a change should have been effected, as a reward for non-performance.

A case in point is the sensitive and strategic Jammu and Kashmir, where Congress, being a national party, other than the ruling BJP, has an important role to play but is being prevented from doing so by organisational shortcomings which the high command refuses to remove. On the occasion of PCC president Tariq Hamid Karra completing two years in office, despite all the controversies he has courted due to his

“style of functioning” and total lack of connect with the rank and file, the AICC in-charge Syed Naseer Hussain rushed to Kashmir to work on providing a new organisational set-up to him as a reward. This happened in the backdrop of a controversy germinating from Karra's alleged non-appearance at the Independence Day function held at the party office.

Shouldn't completion of two years in office have been a stocktaking time, with Karra asked to present his report card? For that reason, any AICC or state/UT functionaries? Appointment or continuation in office shall be directly related to the performance of the incumbent, which should be the thumb rule from AICC down to PCCs.

Such a scenario prevails in many other states and UT units, with no sense of accountability attached anywhere. Apart from the states/UTs, another weak link is the nonchalant attitude of some top AICC office-bearers, particularly those made in charge of the states and UTs. In the absence of accountability, they are merely living in comfort zones, at times becoming Gandhi's cheering brigade. This has become a convention, to be seen to be on his right side.

A classic case of this syndrome is at play in yet another sensitive border state of Punjab. The old guard in the state is feverishly working unitedly to thwart generational change, which has come in the form of Rahul Gandhi-loyalist PCC chief Amrinder Singh Warring, who, like Karra, has also completed two years in office. Serious factionalism has risen ahead of the 2027 Assembly elections. No doubt the old guard is taking undue advantage of the situation, but it is also a reflection on Warring's functioning and ineffective handling by the central leadership. Such situations can only be tackled through quick and tough decisions. No matter if it involves removing a so-called loyalist in the overall interest of the party, as is the case in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab. Politics

The writer is a political analyst; Views presented are personal.

ACTION IS OURS, RESULTS BELONG TO GOD



Ajit Kumar Bishnoi

Yes, I am referring to the famous verse 2.47 of the Bhagavad-Gita. There are four instructions in this verse. The first instruction is: “You have a right only in action.” Lord Krishna is talking about what we do with our mind, words and body. In the spiritual language, these must be our duties, including to self as a soul, to family, nation, etc. And the right is what is within our control as a soul. We can act as we wish, exercising our free will, but the result is not in our hands.

Recently, I was faced with a serious problem; our company's income tax return had come under scrutiny. We were asked to submit supporting evidence of the expenses, and they gave a date by which to submit them. It was a monumental task of transmitting all the expense vouchers. We consulted tax experts. They all advised taking their shelter and, of course, giving a very fat fee to manage this problem. After giving the matter serious thought, we decided to take the pain part; we began transmitting the information sought by them. To cut a long story short, we managed to

transmit all the supporting evidence, as sought by the tax authority. Still, the result was not in our hands, whether they would be satisfied or not. To the relief of all and surprise of the so-called tax experts, we got a no-dues acknowledgement.

This brings us to the second in-

struction of Lord Krishna, which is: “Not ever in determining its fruits/result.” The question naturally arises, then, about who decides the results. The answer lies in the ‘Karmaphala Principle’, which is: “What you sow is what you reap.” God has set up a Divine Authority under

His superintendence to shoulder the responsibility of deciding the results of our ‘karmas’ (deeds). They take all relevant factors into consideration and decide. Therefore, all decisions are, in effect, made by God only.

And God is perfectly just in awarding them. The result belongs to the person concerned, and no one else; he must get it. A wrong impression is prevalent that the fruits of our acts don't belong to us. This is farthest from the truth.

God does not need these fruits. Doesn't He own everything? What happened in the income tax scrutiny? We exercised our right to act, and the result was given to us. We had also obeyed Lord Krishna's instruction of not trying to manipulate the fruit of action. And we also did not disobey the Lord's fourth instruction: “Your attachment to inaction also should not be there.” We painstakingly did our duty.

The conclusion is: We all have a right to do our duties, which is the only right we have. Results are not in our hands. We should do our duties, and neither try to manipulate the results nor be inactive. Then, we will be rewarded suitably; we can be sure of it; God has arranged it.

The American dream, under a visa siege

Kalyani Shankar

The Trump administration aims to reform the immigration system and tighten immigration rules. As part of this, it plans to pause certain immigration visas and pause visa processing. During his second term, the Trump administration has paused or rescheduled visa appointments at US embassies and consulates worldwide. This affects individuals seeking to travel to the US for work, study or family visits.

The administration aims to cancel B1/B2 visas for 200,000 asylum seekers. Since taking office, it has cancelled over 175,000 visas for foreign citizens for a variety of reasons, according to the State Department. This visa pause impacts 75 countries.

The suspension of specific visa categories has created challenges and uncertainty for many foreign nationals, particularly those from India. This decision has raised concerns for families, workers and students who rely on these visas for

various opportunities in the United States. Indiabusiness reports

However, last week, the US resumed issuing immigrant visas to people from 75 countries after a long pause. This change followed a federal court ruling against the visa pause, which began in January to screen applicants who might require more public benefits in the US. This is part of a larger plan to train diplomatic staff globally to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of US diplomatic operations.

Currently, nearly one million Indians are stuck in the US employment-based green card backlog, representing about 79 per cent of those awaiting approval in the first three categories. An analysis by the National Foundation for American Policy suggests that Indian nationals filing applications in January 2026 or later could face waits of 179 years for EB-2 and 38 years for EB-3 permanent residence.

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diplomatic operations more efficient and effective.

The administration is also cracking down on birth tourism, where foreign pregnant women travel to the US to give birth, thus gaining birthright citizenship for their children. Trump has tried to end this practice; however, the courts, including the Supreme Court, have consistently rejected his efforts.

The State Department has announced modifications to visa appointment schedules to support consular officer training. This training aims to help officers better identify visa applicants who may rely on US public benefits and ensure a thorough, consistent evaluation of all visa applications.

The US visa system plays a crucial role in enabling international travel, work, study and family reunification. The government has temporarily paused processing certain visa types, including Temporary Work Visas (H-1B), student visas (F-1) and family-sponsored visas, as part of efforts to improve visa management. This is a chal-

lenging time for many individuals from India and other countries, and these changes are expected to streamline the process moving forward.

Students planning to study in the US are feeling the impact of this uncertainty regarding their visa status, which complicates their enrolment in academic programmes and may force them to re-evaluate their educational plans entirely. The ongoing suspension of visa processing is causing significant issues for families. Many Indian nationals have relatives in the United States waiting for green cards or other immigration assistance, leaving these families uncertain and facing both emotional and practical challenges.

Maintaining familial connections across international borders is difficult, especially during significant life events. India is currently facing major challenges due to recent changes in US policy. Indiabusiness reports

Other nations, such as China, Mexico and the Philippines, which have many citizens living in the

United States, are also affected by these changes. As globalisation connects economies and cultures, these policy changes could significantly impact international relations and economic cooperation.

There is a growing call for immigration reform. As people and families navigate this uncertainty, they need robust policies and support systems more than ever.

Immigrant rights advocates and other organisations are working to improve the US visa process. They aim for the government to recognise the challenges individuals and families face and create easier pathways to obtain visas.

Additionally, the Trump administration plans to revoke the visas of approximately 200,000 foreigners who entered the country for tourism or business but sought to extend their stay by applying for asylum.

Earlier this week, the Trump administration began reviewing a new proposal to overhaul the H-1B visa programme, signalling another potentially significant change to the

employment route used by thousands of Indian professionals. This proposal could impact the US economy by at least \$100 million annually.

Ongoing advocacy and reforms are essential to ensure that the immigration system meets the diverse needs of individuals seeking opportunities in the United States.

Recently, US courts have limited some of the Trump administration's measures, including a federal judge's ruling that overturned a previous decision. But all these have not made the aspirants pull back or stop; they continue towards the completion of their “American dream”.

The suspension of specific visa categories has created challenges and uncertainty for many foreign nationals, particularly those from India. This decision has raised concerns for families, workers, and students who rely on these visas for various opportunities in the United States. Indiabusiness reports

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