

OUTRAGEOUS BEHAVIOUR

The incident of a senior IAS officer using cuss words against a junior officer in an official meeting is cringe worthy. Whatever be the sequence of events or the provocation for the outburst, the officer’s choice of words in an online meeting reflects poorly the officer’s conduct and his attitude. The incident which got recorded and went viral on social media, may also indicate the senior-junior equation within the J&K government. The officers involve hold important positions – the one who was seen abusing is , Administrative Secretary, Labour & Employment Department, and the officer at the receiving end is a local officer is Assistant Director level officer. Whatever be the pressures of job and meeting targets or the provocation, the IAS officer had no business to use cuss words against a subordinate and a woman officer. He might have invited trouble for himself as NCW has taken cognizance of the matter. As such the incident is being projected as local vs outside issue by the politicians. The incident also raises questions about selection process of the IAS officers.

WRONG TIME FOR PROTESTS

Last year, India's Diwali market and festive trade reached a record-breaking ?6.05 lakh crore, registering a 25 percent growth. Thistrand has been consistent as people across social and economic strata spend money on doing up homes, and going on a buying spree. This year capital Delhi is in the middle of dealing with protests of CJP and Congress and this is hurting the economy and businesses be it that of a chole bhature sellers in a wooden cart on a waholesale business of fabrics. This is why the traders have approach the courts seeking directions for the government to banish the protesters in the festival time. The protests may even boomerang on Congress for its timing. The party leaders must understand the traditions and local sentiments and not become spoiler in the common man’s happiness.

Rahul’s Satyagraha: The road to 2029

Kalyani Shankar

With his new digital platform, Rahul Gandhi seeks to unite scattered protests, amplify marginalised voices and sharpen Congress’s challenge to the Modi Government. The test lies in turning public discontent into a cohesive political movement and electoral gains in 2029

A truly effective politician values long-term political influence and a lasting impact. Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also shares this understanding after many ups and downs.

One key aspect of Gandhi’s plan is to engage directly with the public, as his grandmother did, and also to use digital platforms effectively. The launch of the ‘Satyagraha’ platform exemplifies this strategy. In a country where many voices — particularly those of marginalised communities such as students and farmers — are often overlooked, this initiative aims to amplify their concerns and promote inclusivity.

By giving people a platform to register protests and share their stories, Gandhi seeks to build a collective narrative that resonates with a broader audience.

Gandhi’s approach questions the Government’s narrative by engaging sympathetic media and sharing critical information about the ruling party. This strategy aims to create doubt even among Modi’s strongest supporters, reflecting an understanding of how quickly public perception can change in the age of social media. Ultimately, he wants to shift the conversation to issues that matter to ordinary citizens.

Through the ‘Satyagraha’ initiative, Rahul Gandhi seeks to unite various voices and provide hope to those who feel overlooked.

Gandhi understands that if Modi is re-elected as Prime Minister in 2029, Congress may face even greater challenges in reclaiming power.

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and offer hope to those who feel marginalised.

On Saturday, Rahul Gandhi accused the Government of suppressing the truth and launched the ‘Satyagraha’ digital platform to unite various issue-based protests occurring across the country.

Launched the day after Mahatma Gandhi’s 157th birthday, the ‘Satyagraha’ platform aims to support those facing injustice. “Satyagraha is an initiative designed to bring these voices together on one platform,” he said in a post on X. Many individuals, including Gen Z, students and farmers, fight for their rights and often feel isolated. The platform encourages people to register their protests in support of those affected by oppression.

Around the country, various groups fight for their rights but often do so in isolation. Gen Z, students, farmers, Adivasis, Dalits and women each have unique struggles. It is often easier to silence a single voice.

At the party level, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra plans election strategies and drafts the party’s manifesto, while Rahul Gandhi focuses on reaching the public and campaigning intensively. Gandhi’s plans in-

clude direct-action protests, social media engagement and targeting younger voters, specifically Gen Z, along with women, Dalits, Other Backward Classes (OBCs), gig workers and the unemployed.

The first phase of Rahul Gandhi’s initiative focuses on appointing new secretaries to the All India Congress Committee (AICC) to strengthen party operations across states. Strengthening the party’s presence in key states such as Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha and Maharashtra, where it has faced challenges, is crucial for a successful bid in 2029.

Rahul Gandhi is focusing on long-term political influence with his ‘Satyagraha’ initiative, aiming to engage directly with the public and amplify the voices of marginalised communities. Launched after Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday, the platform encourages people, especially Gen Z, students, farmers and other underrepresented groups, to unite and share their struggles.

His strategy includes social media engagement, direct-action protests and targeting younger voters, alongside restructuring party operations to strengthen

Congress in key states such as Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. Following the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Gandhi’s approach has become more confrontational towards the Modi administration, positioning him as a key Opposition figure willing to challenge the Government boldly. He understands the importance of shifting public perception and intends to solidify his role and collaborate with supportive media in the lead-up to the 2029 elections.

Rahul Gandhi’s ‘Satyagraha’ initiative seeks to unite diverse voices and inspire those who feel overlooked. It remains to be seen whether he can translate these plans into political success as India approaches a key election.

Gandhi understands the current political situation well. He recognises that if Modi is re-elected as Prime Minister in 2029, Congress may face even greater challenges in reclaiming power.

In the next three and a half years, Rahul Gandhi plans to solidify his position. He plans to collaborate with friendly media outlets.

He plans to engage Gen Z voters, ultimately helping develop a younger leadership team.

The Congress party has historically struggled with perceptions of Muslim appeasement, which has led many non-Muslim citizens to feel that Muslim leaders sway law and order. This focus on vote-bank politics over effective governance presents significant challenges for the party. Public opinion can shift quickly with economic conditions, government performance and political events, making opinion polls snapshots rather than reliable forecasts for future elections. With the 2029 general election not far away, India’s political landscape could transform substantially.

The key question remains whether current shifts in public perception will endure or be short-lived. Ultimately, India’s democratic process will decide the electoral outcome when voters go to the polls.

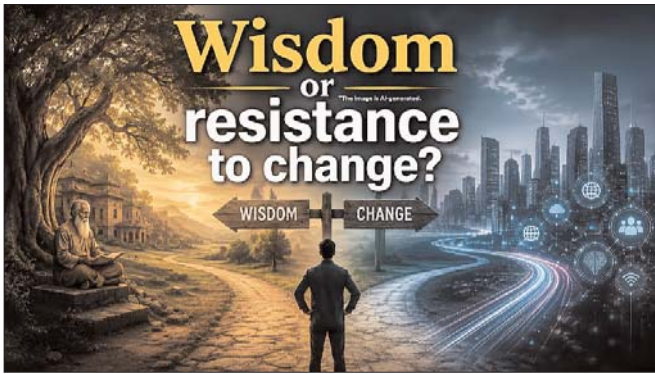
WISDOM OR RESISTANCE TO CHANGE?

Sakshi Sethi

Experience is sometimes worn as a badge of indisputable authority in the hallways of education. These individuals are admired for their decades of classroom management, twenty years of teaching and thirty years of service. However, there is an awkward point that needs to be addressed: Does experience always equate to knowledge, or can it occasionally be used as a handy justification to oppose change? One of the rare occupations where using the same techniques for decades can still be misconstrued as career advancement is probably education. Even if a teacher has twenty-five years of experience, is that really twenty-five years of learning, or just one year repeated twenty-five times if classroom procedures, viewpoints and methods have not changed?

The difference is important.

Without question, experience imparts patience, insight and an awareness of the intricacies of the classroom. Experienced teachers frequently have knowledge that cannot be found in textbooks or training courses.



However, when experience becomes intolerant of younger viewpoints, dismissive of new ideas or resistant to introspection, it loses its instructional usefulness. Paradoxically, although schools support children’s curiosity, experimentation, questioning and innovative thinking, instructors’ own workplaces can hinder these same traits. A child’s curiosity is celebrated, but instructors’ inquiry is sometimes viewed as disobedience.

Young educators frequently bring new insights, confidence with technology and a passion for cutting-edge methods to the teaching profession. However, seniority may be used to measure their accomplishments rather than merit. Sometimes, well-

known rebuttals to suggestions are used, such as “We have always done it this way” or “You will understand when you gain experience.” A troubling conflict is revealed by such remarks. Why should educators themselves become reluctant learners if education

is really about learning? The issue is not limited to specific courses. The leadership of the school must likewise face its obligations. Organisations may designate coordinators, implement complex administrative frameworks and hold workshops for professional growth. However, real cooperation cannot be replaced by titles. Innovation becomes little more than a catchphrase in institutional presentations when communication is still disjointed, duties are not well integrated and professional hierarchies stifle discussion.

Adopting technology, implementing smart classrooms or setting up training sessions is not enough to make a school innov-

ative. The propensity to conflate unthinking obedience with professional respect is also troubling. Respect must continue to be reciprocal, but seniority deserves recognition. To gain professional legitimacy, younger instructors should not have to give up their uniqueness or inventiveness. However, innovation should not be used as a justification for ignoring experience. New strategies must be implemented carefully, and seasoned educators can offer the discernment required to separate significant advancements from passing fads in education.

A conflict between seasoned and up-and-coming educators is not necessary for the future of education. It necessitates a collaboration in which innovation keeps knowledge from becoming outdated and wisdom directs innovation.

The willingness to keep learning over the years may be a better indicator of an educator’s worth than the number of years they have spent in the classroom. After all, a teacher who stops learning runs the risk of losing the essential essence of education, even though they can still teach lessons.

*The writer is an educator and counselor; Views presented are personal.*

Bihar floods: The need for a continuous record

Eklavya Prasad

Floods in Bihar rarely occur as isolated events. They arrive in successive phases, affect different parts of the state and sometimes return to places already hit. A family may still be recovering from lost crops, damaged housing or depleted savings when another flood arrives. Flood reporting must therefore do more than count those affected by the latest rise in water levels. It must show where flooding occurs, how often it returns and how its effects accumulate over the monsoon season.

Bihar already has a flood-reporting mechanism. The Disaster Management Department (DMD), Government of Bihar, publishes daily flood reports and press releases. The challenge is to make these instruments more consistent, connect the information they provide and maintain a reliable record of the flood season.

The first step is to make the reporting system easier to follow. The daily report appears under different titles, including Flood/Heavy Rainfall Report, Daily Flood Report and Daily Flood Situation Report. The department should adopt one consistent title, such as Daily Flood Situation Report, so affected communities, disaster-re-

sponse agencies, development partners and government officials can readily identify the same reporting series across dates. Press releases also appear under different titles, including Hindi titles. Their titles need not match that of the daily report, but each release should clearly identify its purpose and the flood phase it covers.

The September 2 daily report summarised affected areas and relief operations, while the accompanying press release detailed specific incidents, river conditions and administrative responses, including erosion in Bhagalpur and flooding in Bhojpur.

The September 15 documents similarly demonstrate how the formats can complement each other. Both recorded 15 affected districts and 575 gram panchayats. The daily report provided a summary, while the press release included additional information on relief operations and river conditions. Linking these records would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and government officials understand both the scale of the situation and the response under way.

The Daily Flood Report should consistently distinguish three measures: changes during the preceding 24 hours, impacts recorded during each flood phase and cumulative impacts

across the season. These figures should be clearly labelled and kept separate. Phase-specific press releases can provide focused updates on important developments, while the daily report maintains the continuing record.

The need for this distinction becomes clear when the September and October reports are read together. The September 24 Daily Flood Report recorded cumulative impacts across 15 districts, 576 gram panchayats and 50.49 lakh people, before the third flood phase developed around September 28-29. By October 7, the Daily Flood Report recorded 22 affected districts and 61.72 lakh people affected cumulatively during the monsoon season.

The October 4 press release, focusing specifically on the third phase along and around the Gandak, reported approximately 9.87 lakh people affected across six districts, 30 blocks and 169 gram panchayats. By October 11, the press release for the same phase reported approximately 10.22 lakh people affected across six districts, 33 blocks and 173 gram panchayats. These figures describe the evolving impact of the third phase, while the daily report records cumulative seasonal impacts. They should therefore be linked to provide a

clearer picture of how each flood phase contributes to the wider seasonal impact, rather than added together as separate totals.

The reporting system should connect such phase-specific accounts to the seasonal record. It should show which places were affected in each phase, which remained inundated and which experienced flooding again. This also raises an important question about affected populations. If the same community is flooded more than once, how can seasonal figures avoid counting the same people repeatedly while still recording repeated exposure? The total number of people affected and the number exposed to multiple floods measure different aspects of the disaster. Reporting should make that distinction clear.

The same clarity is needed for relief operations. Reports should distinguish assistance provided during a particular phase from assistance provided earlier and from the seasonal total.

They should state how many community kitchens are operating on a given day, distinguish this from the total established over time and specify the period covered by meal figures. Without these distinctions, affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and

government officials cannot reliably interpret what the numbers represent. The Daily Flood Report also needs to identify affected blocks and gram panchayats by name under each district, rather than provide only aggregate figures. This would help affected communities, disaster-response agencies, development partners and officials identify where flooding has occurred, which areas remain affected and where flooding has returned. The same location-wise information should be updated and carried forward in subsequent reports to build a clear record of changing conditions.

River conditions need equally clear reporting. Reports should identify the rivers being observed, show water levels against warning and danger levels, and indicate whether levels are rising or falling. They should also record how long places remain inundated. A falling river level does not necessarily mean that a village is accessible or that drinking water, health care and other essential services have resumed.

Reporting should distinguish between different kinds of damage. A road under water is different from one washed away. A hand pump or piped water supply system that cannot be reached is different from one that has been damaged. A school temporarily

cut off is different from one with structural damage. Reports should distinguish assets that are inundated, inaccessible, non-functional, damaged or destroyed.

Over time, they should also capture verified impacts on drinking water, sanitation, health care, transport, schools, crops, livestock, housing and livelihoods.

Consistency across reporting days is equally important. Each report should state its cut-off time and indicate whether figures are provisional, verified or revised. Significant changes should be explained, and earlier reports should remain available in a searchable archive.

This would allow communities, researchers, development workers, journalists and officials to follow the situation without piecing together information from scattered documents. These improvements need not require an entirely new data collection system. Much of the information is already generated by departments and district administrations.

What is needed is a clear process for collating, verifying and presenting it consistently. The Daily Flood Report should be published regularly, including when the situation stabilises, so that the seasonal record remains continuous.