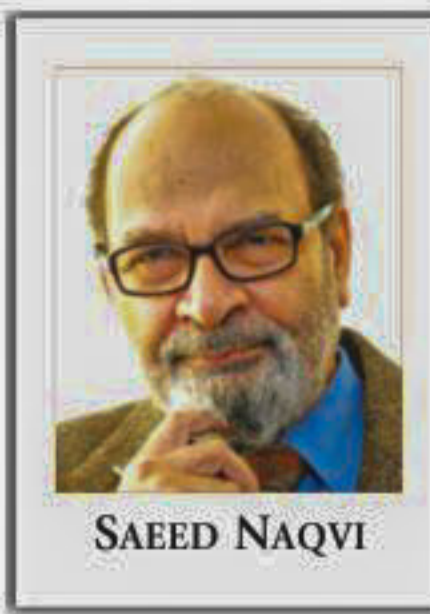


Why Bijnor's communal villainy did not spread



SAEED NAQVI

I had Muzaffar agar riots of February 2013 at the back of my mind when I drove towards Pedda village on the Bijnor-Najibabad Road where three Muslims had been shot dead by Jats who fired with guns and pistols from the terraces of their homes. Trouble began when two Muslim girls were harassed at the bus stop. When their men folk protested, the economically stronger Jats decided to teach them a lesson. Muslims in Pedda have for generations been *Dhobis* or washermen. In Sir Saiyyad Ahamd Khan's framework, these are *arzals* or "menials". Above them in the caste/class hierarchy are *Ajlafs*, weavers, and *Ashraf*, the genteel lot, the ones for whom the Aligarh University was initially opened. That Yasmeen and Farheen are

college going girls is not a negligible detail: it is a glimmer of hope in a picture of unrelieved gloom which envelops the community. Jats are prosperous farmers but socially static on issues like gender and are still bound by Khaps. The man-woman population ratio is eerily adversarial to women. In the Muslim hovel, there is economic want, not social regression. Arrogance of economic power bristles at the sight of the lowest strata crawling upwards. This explains some of the accelerated violence against dalits and Muslims. Caste and communal prejudice converge in such instances. The *gram pradhan* or village head of Pedda, Anis Ahmad, is a short, dark man with a well trimmed beard and a mandatory skull cap, headgear which defines all Muslims from Madrasas. He has gone through the drill at the Deoband seminary, a stint as a tailor in Kuwait and now a dress designer, (believe it or not) for "fashion shows". He is not free of the usual Mullah hypocrisy: "I don't touch female bodies; I

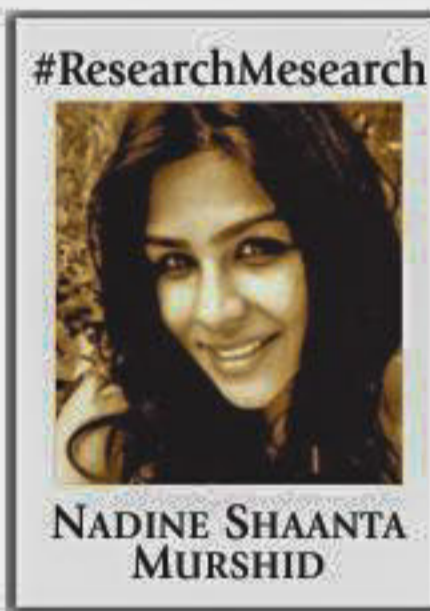
tailor clothes for mannequins." With the advent of washing machines, Muslim washermen in villages like Pedda have diversified as tailors, barbers, fruit and vegetable sellers, automobile mechanics, handy men of all sorts. The *pradhan* takes me into the house where three men were shot dead on the terrace of their home. Below, in a dark verandah, women wail. Outside, across the lane, is the fortified house of Pedda's most powerful Jat, Sansar Singh. He hid in another village five kms away, but has since been arrested along with eight others involved in organising the violence. A dozen or so policemen are snoozing outside Sansar Singh's house, their weapons on their laps. This is the scene outside every Jat house in the lane up to the highway where a large number of policemen keep vigil. "Look," Anis Ahmad points his finger, "They are protecting only Jat houses". At Bijnor's police headquarters,

Superintendent of Police (Rural) Dharam Veer Singh, thumps his table gently. "Yes, we are protecting Jat houses. If police were not posted as a deterrent, angry Muslims may retaliate against Jat women and children." Theoretically, Singh has a point but do Muslims in their current state of demoralisation, ever retaliate? The two local journalists, Naresh Sharma of *Swatantra Awaz* and Jalil Ahmad, of a local TV channel, *India Voice*, are crouching on Singh's table, symbols of watchfulness. Singh smiles, "Please give the police some credit for having prevented riots from spreading." Why did these riots not spread? He cites geography as a roadblock to communalism. "The Ganga flows between Meerut, Muzaffarnagar and Bijnor - the communal wave that overwhelmed areas on the other side of the Ganga some years ago, weakens crossing the river." There are other reasons for weakened communalism in Bijnor. Amit Shah's very determined presence in Muzaffarnagar and

Shamli three years ago made the difference. Trumped up stories of "love jihad"; fake videos from Pakistan's north west circulated as Jats being lynched by Muslims; Maha Panchayats of weapon wielding mobs and Amit Shah's famous refrain, "*Yeh badley ka election hai*" (We go into this election to seek revenge) - all augmented the incendiary atmosphere. Today, there is saffron in the air, true, but not murderous saffronisation. In Bijnor, Muslims as well as the administration (even some Jats) have praised the local MLA Ruchi Veera of the Samajwadi Party who was present in the village round the clock for the duration of tension. In fact, she was able to extract Rs. 20 lakhs from the government in Lucknow by way of relief within days of the violence. Assessments of damage are being made for more. District magistrate Jagat Raj is flanked by City SP M.M. Baig and SSP Umesh Kumar Srivastava, to address about 60 print and TV journalists around a giant oblong table. Seldom have I heard media being so lavishly

thanked for having exercised restraint. On my return when I cross the barrage on the Ganga, I remember SP (Rural), Dharam Veer Singh's words: rivers block communal waves. Before reaching Meerut, I see road signs to Muzaffarnagar. I have horrible memories of that pogrom. Past Meerut is Maliana, the site of the notorious 1987 massacre. The police had separated 42 Muslim young men, lined them up by the nearby canal and shot them. P. Chidambaram was Rajiv Gandhi's Minister of State for Home. He knows that incident like the back of his hand. He is now a columnist. Maybe, someday he will give us the inside story on why the case drags on into its 29th year? Approaching Ghaziabad, I see signs to Dadri where in September 2015, Mohammad Akhlaq was lynched by cow protection vigilantes. His family is still implicated in unproved charges. As lights of Delhi shimmer, the villainy of Pedda recedes. Nastier memories surface. The writer is a senior Indian journalist, television commentator and interviewer.

Speaking in tongues: Language and personality



NADINE SHAANTA MURSHID

My husband writes. He writes poetry, sometimes. In English. But, he draws from several lexicons to articulate his thoughts: English, Bengali, Urdu, Hindi. In his first iteration, he uses words that most closely depict his thoughts. But those words are not always in English. For example, *waqt*. Urdu. And then begins the struggle to find a replacement for that word in English. It may translate into "time" but it's not really time that he means, he means it as that *exact solemn moment*. In that moment, he has gone from embodying one personality to another. We are different people in different languages.

indicating that spatial orientation is specific to language. In a recent talk on campus, my linguist colleague, Eunhun Lee, spoke of the East-West divide in "seeing" things. Apparently, in the East, when looking at a picture of a fish in an aquarium, the first thing that people notice is the environment, and in the West, it is the object: the fish. I'm not a linguist but following the idea that spatial orientation is associated with language, I'm assuming that the structure of the language has something to do with what we see first. What appears to be in line with Lee's observation is research from Lera Boroditsky, who shows that study participants who spoke English, Japanese, and Finnish were all equally likely to report events from an "agent" or "person" perspective until the event was an accident and the agent wasn't responsible for the act. Respondents who spoke Japanese and Finnish were less likely to identify the agent as an actor in



ILLUSTRATION: TOBIAS MIKKELSEN

emotions, and we are able to draw upon a larger body of history with which we can explain more lucidly what we believe in, what we feel. But it's probably not often that we're being "both" and therefore a "third" version of ourselves. This is because it is possible that even when mixing up the languages, personality depends on what language we are speaking in, in our heads. For example, sometimes I speak in English but I'm *really* speaking in Bangla, particularly when speaking to other Bangla speakers who also speak in English, which is indicated through my accent and sporadic use of Bangla words even in a sentence constructed in English. In that case, I would be the version of myself that operates in Bangla, even when using both languages. In other words, that may not necessarily mean that I have a third version of who I am. But, certainly, our ability and proficiency to operate in a particular language is central to the corresponding personality. If, for example, I am adept at speaking in Bangla more than in English, if I write better in Bangla than I do in English, if I have a wider range in terms of vocabulary in Bangla than in English, then I am more likely to display my Bangla personality more

consistently. What does this mean in real life? 1) Sometimes, these personalities may collide. 2) We respond to others based on our dominant language, but when their dominant language is not congruent with ours, our understanding may not be congruent with what they intend. For example: apologies. When apologised to in Bangla, I am never quite sure whether it is genuine. There's something about "I'm really sorry" that resonates. There is no corresponding apology in Bangla that I can internalise and accept as an apology. 3) Because in the world of bilinguals, how we see the world changes depending on which language we're speaking, so does our implicit bias, research shows, which means, who we like and dislike may depend on which language we're operating in! And that means: we all need to learn another language, immerse in other cultures, and expand our horizons, so that we can identify our implicit biases as we straddle our different personalities. Only then can we learn to have empathy for other people. Only then will the war on peace come to an end. The writer is Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University at Buffalo.

We respond to others based on our dominant language, but when their dominant language is not congruent with ours, our understanding may not be congruent with what they intend.

speakers do so based on context. So what does that mean when we operate in two or more languages? One answer is that, it would depend on which language we are speaking in. In terms of "seeing" things, perhaps bilingual speakers of an Eastern and a Western language are more likely to see the object and the environment together. Or, more likely, it would depend on which culture they're operating in. Hull had shown how individuals conform to cultural norms of the operating language, which then brings about the change in personality when the different languages are spoken. But, I would argue that it's not merely language that changes who we are, it's also the location in which we speak and the people that we are speaking to. Specifically, because as bilingual persons we not only speak to others in single languages but in mixed-languages (with other bilingual persons), we can make the argument that there is a third personality that we embody, in addition to the two based on the two languages that we operate in. That raises the question: is that

third version of ourselves the most true and authentic? I don't know, but my sense is that in our mixed-up sentences we draw from a larger lexicon, we are able to use the exact word that reflect our thoughts and

CROSSWORD BY THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS
- 1 Deli counter fixture
 - 6 Brit's baby carriage
 - 10 Mortise partner
 - 11 Ear parts
 - 13 Take as one's own
 - 14 Tolerate
 - 15 Craze
 - 16 Holm of "The Hobbit"
 - 18 Tell whoppers
 - 19 Crusty loaf
 - 22 Baker's vote
 - 23 Poker payment
 - 24 Cries of grief
 - 27 Herd member
 - 28 Sedan or compact
 - 29 Take to court
 - 30 Gathered hairstyle
 - 35 Craggy hill
 - 36 Skirt edge
 - 37 Gift topper
 - 38 Make blank
 - 40 Quite impressed
 - 42 Calendar markings
 - 43 Add up
 - 44 Pants part

- DOWN
- 1 Work group
 - 2 Fragrant wood
 - 3 Battery end
 - 4 Cut off
 - 5 Lures
 - 6 Fallback strategy
 - 7 Stick up
 - 8 Chisholm Trail end
 - 9 Act the peacemaker
 - 12 Sowing machine
 - 17 "That's it!"
 - 20 Backpack material
 - 21 Critic, at times
 - 24 Floated on the breeze
 - 25 Colorful sky shows
 - 26 Repeat
 - 27 Hands in
 - 29 That woman
 - 31 Heart's place
 - 32 Let up
 - 33 Des Moines
 - 34 Lived
 - 39 Sailing site
 - 41 Word of denial

YESTERDAY'S ANSWER

S	C	A	R	I	B	I	S
T	O	L	E	C	A	N	E
S	T	O	P	I	C	I	N
U	P	S	T	A	G	E	W
B	I	T	N	A	R	R	A
S	T	O	L	T	Z	E	E
U	S	E	R	S			
B	R	A	G	L	A	T	H
R	E	V	E	A	L	S	A
A	P	E	L	E	C	A	R
S	E	N	S	E	A	L	D
H	A	G	A	R	L	O	U
T	E	X	T	S	U	P	S

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার
অর্থমন্ত্রণালয়
অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ
প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা
শেরে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা।

"পুরাতন মাইক্রোবাস ও কার বিক্রয়ের 'দরপত্র বিজ্ঞপ্তি'"

অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, অর্থমন্ত্রণালয়ের নিম্নবর্ণিত মাইক্রোবাস ও কার যে অবস্থায় আছে তার ভিত্তিতে ক্রয় করতে ইচ্ছুক ব্যক্তি/প্রতিষ্ঠানের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে :

ক্রম নং	গাড়ীর রেজিস্ট্রেশন নম্বর	যানবাহনের ধরণ	প্রাপ্তকাল	গাড়ীর অবস্থান
০১	ঢাকা মেট্রো-চ-৫১-০১৩১	মাইক্রোবাস	১৯৯৪	ক্যান্টিনের সামনে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা চত্বর, ঢাকা।
০২	ঢাকা মেট্রো-চ-০২-৪২১০	মাইক্রোবাস	১৯৯৪	ক্যান্টিনের সামনে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা চত্বর, ঢাকা।
০৩	ঢাকা মেট্রো-চ-৫১-১৭৬২	মাইক্রোবাস	১৯৯৮	ক্যান্টিনের সামনে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা চত্বর, ঢাকা।
০৪	ঢাকা মেট্রো-খ-১১-২৯২৭	কার	১৯৯৫	ক্যান্টিনের সামনে অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, পরিকল্পনা চত্বর, ঢাকা।

দরপত্রের শর্তাবলী :

- ১। প্রতিটি গাড়ীর জন্য পৃথক দরপত্র দাখিল করতে হবে। একজন দরপত্র দাতা এক বা একাধিক গাড়ীর জন্য পৃথক সিডিউলের মাধ্যমে পৃথক সীলমোহরকৃত খামে দরপত্র দাখিল করতে পারবেন। সীলমোহরকৃত খামের উপর গাড়ীর নম্বর অবশ্যই উল্লেখ করতে হবে।
- ২। প্রতিটি গাড়ীর জন্য নগদ ৫০০/- (পাঁচশত) টাকা (অফেরৎযোগ্য) মূল্যে আগামী ১৭/১০/২০১৬ পর্যন্ত অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে উপ-সচিব (প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা), অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, ব্লক নং-১০, কক্ষ নং-১৬ দরপত্র সিডিউল ক্রয় করা যাবে।
- ৩। দরপত্র আগামী ১৮/১০/২০১৬ তারিখে দুপুর-২:৩০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ, ব্লক নং-১০, কক্ষ নং-১৭-এ রক্ষিত দরপত্র বাস্কে গ্রহণ করা হবে এবং বেলা ৩:০০ ঘটিকার উপস্থিত দরদাতাগণের সম্মুখে (যদি কেউ উপস্থিত থাকেন) দরপত্র খোলা হবে।
- ৪। উদ্ধৃত মূল্যের ১০% অর্থ দরপত্র জামানত বাবদ যে কোন সিডিউল ব্যাংকের ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আকারে হিসাব রক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা, অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ-এর অনুকূলে দরপত্রের সাথে দাখিল করতে হবে।
- ৫। কৃতকার্য দরদাতাকে কার্যাদেশ ইস্যুর তারিখ হতে ১৫(পনের) দিনের মধ্যে অবশিষ্ট ৯০% অর্থ পে-অর্ডার/ব্যাংক ড্রাফট আকারে হিসাব রক্ষণ কর্মকর্তা, অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ-এর অনুকূলে পরিশোধ করে এবং সরকারি বিধি মোতাবেক আয়কর ও ভ্যাট সরকারি কোষাগারে চালানোর মাধ্যমে জমা প্রদানপূর্বক চালানোর মূলকপি অত্র অফিসে দাখিল করে গাড়িগুলো বুঝে নিতে হবে। নির্দিষ্ট সময়ের মধ্যে উক্ত অর্থ পরিশোধে ব্যর্থ হলে দরপত্রের সঙ্গে জমাকৃত জামানত বাজেয়াপ্ত করা হবে।
- ৬। অফিস চলাকালীন সময়ে যে কোন দিন গাড়িগুলো উপরে বর্ণিত (৫নং কলামে) অবস্থানে সকাল ১০:০০ ঘটিকা হতে বিকাল ৪:০০ ঘটিকার মধ্যে পরিদর্শন করা যাবে।
- ৭। গাড়ী সংক্রান্ত ব্যাপারে তথ্য জানার প্রয়োজন হলে উপ-সচিব, প্রশাসন-২ অধিশাখা, অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ-এর সাথে যোগাযোগ করা যেতে পারে।
- ৮। দরপত্রের বৈধতার মেয়াদ হল ১২০ (একশত বিশ) দিন।
- ৯। কারণদর্শনো ছাড়াই যে কোন অথবা সকল দরপত্র বাতিল করার ক্ষমতা কর্তৃপক্ষ সংরক্ষণ করেন।

GD- 1904

উপ-সচিব
মোঃ মিজানুর রহমান
ফোন : ৯১১৭৫৩৫