

Course correction – RE-EXAMINE THE BILL**Concerns about the triple talaq Bill must not be dismissed as an attempt to sabotage it**

The winter session of Parliament saw more political positioning than appraisal of a legislation to make instant triple talaq a criminal offence. With the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill pending in the Rajya Sabha, the best option would be to refer it to a select committee to help bring about a **consensus** on how to address the problem of talaq-e-biddat, as there is no serious opposition to the principle that it is morally **abhorrent** and legally impermissible. The **core** question is whether resorting to an illegal and **arbitrary** form of divorce should necessarily lead to a prison term for the offending husband. A three year prison term, besides a fine, also raises the issue of **proportionality**. The Opposition has raised three concerns: whether a civil wrong, mainly a breach of a marriage contract in an arbitrary manner, **ought** to be treated as a crime; whether it is not a contradiction of sorts for the law to jail a husband for pronouncing instant talaq and also **mandate** that he pay a **subsistence** allowance to the wife; and whether making it a **cognizable** and non bailable offence would lead to it being misused against Muslim men. Further, some see an internal **contradiction** in the way the law is **sought** to be framed. On the one hand it says instant triple talaq in any form is **void**, thereby declaring that the marriage continues to **subsist**; but it also talks of issues such as the **custody** of children and maintenance, which would arise only after a divorce. These are valid concerns and cannot be dismissed by the BJP as arguments aimed to **sabotage** the Bill.

The Bill is now in the Rajya Sabha, where the BJP and its allies do not have a majority. Some of its key allies, such as the AIADMK, the Telugu Desam Party and the Biju Janata Dal, are against the penal provision. The through in the Lok Sabha, but has taken the position that referring it to a parliamentary committee may help remove some **lacunae**. **Initially** the party appeared to question the prescription of a jail term, but it has raised a new question. It wants to know whether the government would take care of the **sustenance** of the woman concerned if her husband is jailed for uttering triple talaq. The **dilemma** before the Congress is that it cannot be seen as reprising the role it had played over 30 years ago in the Shah Bano episode, when it brought in legislation to **scupper** a Supreme Court verdict in favour of a Muslim woman's claim for maintenance. However, **hasty** legislation passed in the commotion of a divided House may not help the cause. A sound legal frame work to deal with all issues arising from instant talaq ought to be **crafted** after deeper consideration.

WORD LIST

1. **Consensus** : (general agreement)
Synonym : accord, consent, harmony, unanimity, unity, concord
2. **Abhorrent**: (disgusting)
Synonym : despicable, loathsome, repulsive, detestable, offensive.
3. **Core** : (centre, gist)
Synonym : basis, body, bottom line, crux, essence, focus, foundation, importance, origin, root, substance, thrust.
4. **Arbitrary** : (whimsical, chance)
Synonym : capricious, discretionary, erratic, frivolous, inconsistent, irrational, irresponsible, random, subjective, unreasonable, wilful.
5. **Proportionality** : (as in ratio, as in symmetry) (percentage, relation of part to whole)
Synonym : proportion, quota, rate, scale, arrangement, correlation, equation, fraction
6. **Ought** : (burden)
Synonym : concern, need, tax, care, commitment, committal, custody, duty, obligation, onus, responsibility, right, task, trust.
7. **Mandate** : (authority, order)

- Synonym : authorization, command, decree, directive, injunction, instruction, sanction.
8. **Subsistence** : (Provisions for survival)
Synonym : livelihood, ration, sustenance, affluence, aliment, alimentation, capital, earnings.
 9. **Cognizable** : (as in perceptible, as in perceivable)(noticeable, obvious)
Synonym : appreciable, audible, detectable, discernible, distinct, distinguishable, observable, palpable
 10. **Contradiction** : (variance to something)
Synonym : conflict, difference, disagreement, discrepancy, dispute, inconsistency, confutation, defiance, denial
 11. **Sought** : (wanted)
Synonym : desired, hunted, needed, long for
 12. **Void** : (empty)
Synonym : abandoned, bare, barren, clear, deprived, drained, free, lacking, scant
 13. **Subsist** : (keep going, living)
Synonym : get along, get by, scrape by, be, breathe, continue, last, live, endure
 14. **Custody** : (supervision, charge of something)
Synonym : care, guardianship, protection, aegis, auspices, management, observation, preservation, salvation, safekeeping
 15. **Sabotage** : (damage, incapacitate)
Synonym : destruction, disruption, subversion, treachery, treason, vandalism
 16. **Lacunae** (Lacuna): (pause)
Synonym : break, cavity, depression, gap, hiatus, interim, interval, space
 17. **Initially** : (at first)
Synonym : originally, at the beginning first
 18. **Sustenance** : (necessities for existence)
Synonym : livelihood, nourishment, nutrition, subsistence, aliment
 19. **Dilemma** : (crisis)
Synonym : difficulty, embarrassment, impasse, mess, plight, predicament, problem, puzzle, quandary
 20. **Scupper**: (a hole in a ship's side to carry water overboard from the deck)
(an outlet in the side of a building for draining water)
 21. **Hasty** : (speedy; without much thought)
Synonym : abrupt, careless, expeditious, hurried, ill-advised, impulsive, quick, rapid, reckless, sudden swift, urgent.
 22. **Crafted** : (conceive, dream up)
Synonym : arrange, come up with, concoct, construct, craft, create, design, discover, forge, formulate, hatch, invent, mastermind, prepare, workout

Course correction – TOWARDS STABILITY

Nepal must hasten the process of government formation

A month after the Left Alliance secured a **decisive** victory in Nepal's parliamentary elections, a government is yet to be formed in Kathmandu. The Alliance was **forged** just before the elections between the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist Centre). The transfer of power from the Nepali Congress to the UML led **coalition** was delayed **initially** due to **procedural** issues. The Upper House, or the National Assembly, needed to be indirectly elected by the **provincial** assemblies. The parties had disagreed on the means of this indirect election,

with the NC advocating a **proportional** representation single transferable vote system, and the UML seeking a majority vote. After President Bidhya Devi Bhandari **ratified** a long pending **ordinance** that allowed elections based on the single transferable vote in late December 2017, this issue appeared to have been **resolved**. But there are other procedural issues to be sorted out. In **consultation** with the Left Alliance, the caretaker government has to first appoint governors to the seven provinces. Then, the process of choosing their capitals, in order to **convene** the Assemblies, can be completed. Tentative proposals on new capitals had given rise to protests in several towns, and the main political parties are unwilling to take a clear position on the issue. The caretaker NC government does not seem to be particularly keen on resolving this, and a proposal has been floated to allow the provincial assemblies to convene in Kathmandu first. In the absence of a **consensus**, this may be best.

The clear and decisive choice by the electorate in the polls has put the responsibility of operationalizing the **intricate** provincial model on the Left Alliance. Once the process of nominations to the National Assembly is complete – with 33% of the overall representation in Parliament reserved for women – the election of the Prime Minister will follow. It is a **foregone** conclusion that UML leader K.P.Oli will be elected: the party got close to the majority mark on its own in the first part the post seats. Ten years since the end of the civil war and the convening of the Constituent Assembly, the promise of economic development has been **belied**. This is one of the reasons behind agitations called by democratic and republican forces seeking a new CA. Nepal's economy continues to be highly dependent on **remittances** from Nepali **migrants** as the **agrarian** sector and industrial growth, especially in the hydro-energy sector, have **stagnated**. For too long, political posturing and the game of thrones involving the major parties, the UML, the NC and the Maoists, in Kathmandu have become **pursuits** in themselves. With the Left Alliance promising a greater degree of **cohesion** and winning a clear victory, the sooner the process of election of a new Prime Minister is **accomplished**, the faster Nepal can get on with the business of governance.

WORD LIST

1. **Decisive** : (definite)
 Synonym: conclusive, critical, crucial, definite, determined, fateful, forceful, influential, momentous, resolute, significant.
2. **Forged** : (fake)
 Synonym: counterfeit, spurious, supposititious
3. **Coalition** : (allied group, association)
 Synonym: affiliation, alliance, amalgam, amalgamation, block, combination, combine, compact, conduction, consolidation, conspiracy, faction, federation, merging, party, unification.
4. **Initially** : (at first)
 Synonym: originally, first, at the beginning
5. **Procedural** :
 1. Relating to an established or official way of doing something.
 Example : "The developers had complied with all the relevant procedural requirements"
 2. A television series, film or novel characterised by detailed, realistic treatment of professional procedures, especially police procedures.
 Example : "the procedural about police officers going undercover will debut later this month"
6. **Provincial** : (countrified; limited)
 Synonym: local, rural, bucolic, country, homespun, narrow, pastoral, petty, rustic, sectarian
7. **Proportional** : (equivalent, proportionate)
 Synonym: commensurate, corresponding, reciprocal, comparative, correlative, equal,

even, relative, symmetrical

8. **Ratify** : (affirm, authorize)
 Synonym : approve, confirm, endorse, establish, okay, sign, uphold, accredit, authenticate, bind, bless, certify
9. **Ordinance** : (law, rule)
 Synonym : authorization, cannon, code, command, decree, dictum, direction, edict, enactment, fiat, mandate, order, precept, prescript, regulation, ruling.
10. **Resolve** : (make up one's mind; find solution)
 Synonym: agree, answer, clear up, conclude, deal with, decide, determine, fix, settle, workout, undertake, analyse
11. **Consultation** : (asking, conference)
 Synonym: appointment, conference, deliberation, dialogue, discussion, examination, hearing, interview, meeting, session
12. **Convene** : (bring together; meet)
 Synonym: assemble, gather, open, summon, call, congregate, muster, come together
13. **Consensus** : (general agreement)
 Synonym: accord, consent, harmony, unanimity, unity, concord
14. **Intricate** : (complicated, elaborate)
 Synonym: baroque, complex, difficult, sophisticated, tangled, tortuous, tricky
15. **Foregone** : (predestined)
 Synonym: destined, certain, inescapable, inevitable, predictable
16. **Belie** : (disprove, deceive)
 Synonym: contradict, negate, repudiate, confute, contravene, controvert, deny, disagree, explode, oppose
17. **Remittances** : (as in alimony, allowance, compensation, discharge)
 (money paid in support of a former spouse)
 Synonym: keep, livelihood, living, maintenance, provision, subsistence, sustenance, upkeep
18. **Migrant** : (Person who moves to a foreign place)
 Synonym : emigrant, evacuee, expatriate, immigrant, traveller, gypsy.
19. **Agrarian** : (concerning land, farming)
 Synonym : agricultural, rural, natural, peasant, rustic
20. **Stagnate** : (deteriorate by lack of action)
 Synonym : fester, hibernate, languish, stall, stand still, constipate, decay, decline, idle
21. **Pursuit** : (chase, search)
 Synonym : hunt, enquiry, quest, following, pursual, stalk, tracking, trail.
22. **Cohesion** : (union)
 Synonym : coherence, adherence, attachment
23. **Accomplished** : (skilled in activity)
 Synonym : adept, consummate, gifted, polished, proficient, skilful, talented, cultivated, savvy
