

LYNCHING, NOT MURDER
Suspicion that the Ansari case is being diluted underscores need for anti-lynching law

The decision of the Jharkhand police that the killing of Tabrez Ansari, 24, in June did not amount to murder is quite debatable. They have chosen to charge the 11 men arrested for his lynching with culpable homicide that does not amount to murder. To the layman, it would seem strange that those who labelled Ansari a thief, tied him to a pole and assaulted him for hours at night, are not going to be prosecuted for murder. It is not clear if the police are going to include accounts that claim he was forced to chant 'Jai Shri Ram'. This aspect may help establish a clear sectarian motive on the part of the crowd to turn into a lynch mob and attack him. It is known that it was only the arrival of the police that ended the assault on him. That the police have chosen to prosecute them for culpable homicide shows that the causal link between the assault on his person and his death has been established. It is true that the line between culpable homicide and murder is thin. It is the courts that usually assess the circumstances in which a homicide took place and decide whether it amounted to murder or not. Murder is punishable under Section 302 with death or life imprisonment, while forms of culpable homicide attract either a life term or 10 years in prison under Section 304 of the IPC.

The official explanation for concluding that it was not murder is unconvincing. The two-pronged argument is that the medical report gave the cause of death as 'cardiac arrest due to stress', and the fact that the victim did not die immediately, but succumbed some days later. The police also say a second opinion from forensic experts was that the death was caused due to a combination of heart attack and the injuries he suffered. It is quite obvious that merely attributing death to a heart attack is meaningless without referring to the trauma caused by the physical assault. It may not make a legal difference to the prosecution whether the accused are given a life term for murder or mere culpable homicide not amounting to murder. However, invoking only the offence of culpable homicide not amounting to murder may make it easier for the defence to claim that their offence lacked premeditation or intention. Instead, they could claim that they were deprived of their self-control by the "provocation" given by the victim. The narrative in recent lynching incidents that it was the victim who was at fault may come in for needless reiteration unless the prosecution resolutely makes a case of murder. The suspicion that the charge is being diluted underscores the need for a special anti-lynching law. Such a law could cover acts of group violence, whether spontaneous or planned, so that those who join lynch mobs do not gain from any ambiguity about their intentions.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Suspicion	Noun	Intuition, feeling, impression, inkling, surmise
Dilute	Verb	Make weaker, weaken, doctor, adulterate
Debateable	Adj.	Arguable, disputable, contentious, mooted
Culpable	Adj.	Blamed, guilty, at fault, blameable, censurable
Homicide	Noun	Murder, killing, assassination, liquidation,

Layman	Noun	extermination, butchery
Strange	Adj.	Common man
Label	Verb	Unusual, odd, curious, peculiar, bizarre
Assault	Verb	Tag, attach labels to, tab, mark, flag
Prosecute	Verb	Attack, fly at, go for, turn on, fall on
Sectarian	Adj.	Take to court, accuse, summons, charge, indict
Assess	Verb	Separatist, dissenter, dissident, non conformist
Circumstances	Noun	Evaluate, judge, estimate, appraise, analyse
Punishable	Adj.	Situation, conditions, state of affairs
Imprisonment	Noun	Illegal, unlawful, illegitimate, detention
Unconvincing	Adj.	Incarceration, internment, detention
Pronged	Adj.	Improbable, unlikely, implausible
Argument	Noun	Pierce, stab, impale, transfix
Stress	Noun	Vendetta, quarrelling, squabbling, run in
Forth with	Adj.	Pressure, tension, strain, tautness
Succumb	Verb	Instantly, immediately, summarily
Expert	Noun	Surrender, yield, give up, capitulate
Attribute	Verb	Adept, adroit, gash, gouge, graze
Obvious	Adj.	Ascribe, assign, accredit, credit, impute
Refer	Verb	Clear, sure, evident, apparent, manifest, transparent
Trauma	Noun	Conspicuous, pronounced
Invoke	Verb	Allude, touch on / upon, mention, cite, note, broach
Offence	Noun	Injury, damage, hurt, wound, sore, cut
Pre-meditation	Noun	Pray to, appeal to, beg, implore, importune
Intention	Noun	Crime, misdemeanour, felony, wrong doing, Delinquency
Provocation	Noun	Planning, intent, forethought, deliberation
Narrative	Noun	Aim, purpose, intent, objective
Reiterate	Adj.	Goading, incitement, egging on, inducement, stirring
Spontaneous	Adj.	Inspiration
Ambiguity	Noun	Account, story, chronicle, portrayal
		Repeat, iterate, recapitulate, retell
		Unforced, voluntary, unconstrained, unbidden
		Impulsive
		Ambivalence, equivocation, obscurity, vagueness, enigma

BREXIT BRINKMANSHIP

Boris Johnson is firm on leaving by October 31, but a last-minute breakthrough looks remote

The recently enacted law to stop Britain from leaving the European Union (EU) without an agreement has brought little certainty that a cliff-edge exit will be avoided. Despite failing to block that legislation and twice losing his bid to hold a general election, Prime Minister Boris Johnson is defiant that the country must leave on October 31. His refusal to seek a further three-month extension from the EU has raised concerns that the government could be held in contempt of parliament. With other hardline eurosceptics, Mr. Johnson has long resisted calls to take no deal off the table, adamant that without such a threat, the government could not strike a bargain in its EU negotiations. Opposition

parties and several rebel Tories have stressed the fact that the 2016 referendum merely asked Britons whether they would stay in, or leave the bloc. Moreover, as the agreement still on the table has been rejected repeatedly by Conservative MPs, it was the entire legislature's responsibility to determine the precise terms of the historic exit. With the many controversial manoeuvres thwarted, the government has been forced to renew its efforts to find fresh terms to reach an agreement with Brussels. Ahead of a meeting with his Irish counterpart on Monday, Mr. Johnson proposed aligning Northern Ireland with the EU single market solely for agricultural products. Dublin has said that the idea could not go far since agribusiness forms a small proportion of its trade with Belfast. There is also a move to bring Northern Ireland under the regulatory framework of the EU single market, mooted in 2017 by the EU. This was rejected subsequently by the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) and Theresa May as potentially detrimental to the U.K.'s sovereignty, unity and integrity. Such an arrangement would entail erecting border checkpoints between Northern Ireland and Britain.

The alternative is the now famous Irish backstop, which would keep the U.K. in an EU Customs union, but strip London of room to make trade deals with third countries. That has already been voted down thrice by Parliament under Ms. May and dismissed by Mr. Johnson and other eurosceptics. But the DUP's support has little relevance to the Conservative government, which is already without a majority after Mr. Johnson sacked 21 MPs for backing the 'stop no deal' legislation. There is speculation that the government could revive the proposal on retaining only Northern Ireland's status, notwithstanding Mr. Johnson's assurances to the DUP leader. The latter option affords the only chance there is of an agreement at the October summit of EU leaders and Britain leaving with a deal at the end of the month. Should an accord with the bloc prove elusive, Mr. Johnson is under legal obligation to seek an extension. But he and his advisers are believed to be exploring options that will spare him from making another request.

<u>Words</u>	<u>Kind</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
Brinkmanship	Noun	The policy of pushing a dangerous situation the brink of disaster
Enact	Verb	Make law, pass, approve, ratify, validate, authorize
Defiant	Adj.	Intransigent, resistant, obstinate, un-cooperative
Concerns	Noun	Worries, disturbance, anxiety, disquiet, apprehension, perturbation
Extension	Noun	Addition, add on, adjunct, addendum, augmentation
Contempt	Noun	Scorn, disrespect, deprecation, denigration
Hardline	Adj.	Uncompromising, strict, stringent, extreme
Eurosceptics	Noun	A person opposed to increasing the power of the European union
Resist	Verb	Withstand, hold out against, combat, counter
Off the table		No longer available / to be withdrawn
Adamant	Adj.	Unshakable, immovable, inflexible, determined
Threat	Noun	Menace, warning, ultimatum, commination
Negotiation	Noun	Discussion, parley, consultation, conference

Rebel	Noun	Insurgent, revolutionary, mutineer, agitator
Referendum	Noun	Public vote, plebiscite, popular, ballot
Reject	Verb	Repudiate, rebuff, turn down, jettison
Precise	Adj.	Exact, accurate, explicit, unambiguous
Controversial	Adj.	Contentious, disputed, contended, debatable, arguable
Manoeuvres	Noun	Operation, exercise, activity, movement
Thwart	Verb	Prevent, impede, hinder, obstruct, interfere with
Counter part	Noun	Equivalent, opposite, number, peer, complement
Align	Verb	Line up, range, arrange in line, put in order
Agribusiness	Noun	Agriculture, conducted on strictly commercial principles
Mooted	Adj.	Debate, open to discussion, doubtful
Potential	Adj.	Conjectural, conceivable, generable, plausible
Detrimental	Adj.	Dangerous, harmful, perilous, deleterious
Sovereignty	Noun	Jurisdiction, independence, self government, self rule
Integrity	Noun	Honesty, uprightness, probity, rectitude
Entail	Adj.	Upright, bolt upright, straight, vertical
Back stop	Noun	Barrie, obstruction, obstacle, hindrance
Dismiss	Verb	Cancel, send away, release, let go
Relevance	Noun	Appositeness, appropriateness, aptness, fitness
Sack	Verb	Dismiss, discharge, cashier
Not with standing	Conjunction	Although / despite
Revive	Verb	Come round, get over, revitalize, engender
Bloc	Noun	Alliance, association, coalition, confederation
Elusive	Adj.	Difficult to find, unreal