

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, |

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

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| 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 |