

## **Agenda 2019 – Part – 6 : A Campaign of Fake Issues Never Works**

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The real strength of India's democracy is the inherent wisdom of the voters. They know what is in their best interest. They make harsh but correct judgments. They punish non-performers and vote back those who deliver. Pollsters, political pundits and commentators can go wrong. Many catch the trend but never its intensity. It is only on the day of results that analysts discover a wave.

### **Why do waves occur in an election?**

Like-minded people with a sense of fair judgement vote in same direction. Unlike many western democracies, a sizeable section of India's population is not permanently politically affiliated. They have preferences. Their vote preference varies from election to election. They make a judgement on merits and then vote. When similarly situated people with same preference vote in a direction, it constitutes a wave. Similarly hung assemblies and Parliaments are predicted only in opinion polls. The voter is far more decisive. He endeavours to elect a Government with a clear mandate. The front-runner gets more seats than predicted.

It is this sense of fairness of the Indian electorate that enables it to decide on issues. The voter has a huge potential to distinguish between truth and falsehood. Truth holds. Falsehood falls apart. Political leaders are over-confident of their wisdom. Little do they realise that the electorate is wiser than them. He is capable of punishing those who resort to falsehood.

It is a recognition of the performance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Government that Opposition, after five years, has no real issue against the Government. The Government is contesting on a pro-incumbency performance platform. It is a Government with a leader with whom the comfort level of the voter is high. The Opposition is in a state of panic. It's single point programme is a negative one – 'remove one man'. The level of ambition is limited. In the absence of any real issue against the Government, Rahul Gandhi has led not only his party but the entire Opposition to rely on fake and manufactured issues. They raise fake issues, create an echo effect and then believe their falsehood to be true. My purpose today is to analyse each one of these issues.

### **Rafale**

The Opposition's fake issue of Rafale is that a costlier combat aircraft has been purchased by the present Government. Favours have been shown to a domestic industrialist and procedural violations have taken place.

### **Truth:**

Both the Supreme Court and the CAG have cleared the deal. They rejected all the above contentions. The Government has saved thousands of crores of the exchequer in the Rafale deal compared to the prices quoted in 2007. All procedures have been followed and not one rupee favour has been shown by the Government to any domestic industrialist. Rafale is not

to be manufactured in India at all. The Supreme Court has already examined and cleared this aspect.

### **Judge Loya's death**

The Sessions Judge of Mumbai, Judge Loya, was hearing a criminal case in which the BJP President had been falsely made an accused. While attending a wedding in Nagpur, he suddenly died. The opposition claimed that this was an unnatural death and the Supreme Court must appoint an enquiry into this.

#### **Truth:**

The Supreme Court heard the petition in a Bench of three Judges, examined each fact and found that he died of a heart attack. There were two District Judges with him when he suffered the heart attack at Guest House. It was these two District Judges, alongwith a Registrar of the Nagpur Bench of the High Court, who took him to the hospital where he was declared dead. A number of High Court Judges reached the hospital. There was nobody there except judges or doctors. Justice D.Y. Chandrachud speaking for the Bench dismissed each allegations as false in nature. Strictures were passed against the petitioners.

### **Bank loan waiver**

It was alleged by the Opposition that loans worth Rs.2,50,000 crores of fifteen industrialists have been waived by this Government.

#### **Truth:**

Not one rupee of loan has been waived. Indiscriminate loans were given during 2008-2014 by Public Sector Banks. They became NPAs. The present Government enacted 'The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code', removed the defaulting managements and have, in the last two years, recovered almost rupees three lakh crore worth of NPAs.

### **The EVM issue**

The fake issue is that EVM machines are being tampered.

#### **Truth:**

India's Election Commission is an extremely fair and an independent institution. Millions of staff are involved in the process of manufacturing machines and conducting the elections. The electronic voting machines were introduced when the Congress Party was at the power. In the last two and a half decades, dozens of elections have been held where parties have either won or lost. This is nothing wrong with the machines. There is a problem with the political losers. It is the same machine with which the Congress party won the recent Assembly elections.

### **Freedom of Speech is being crushed at JNU**

It was alleged that by prosecuting those raising seditious slogans on breaking India into pieces at the JNU, the Government is threatening free speech.

**Truth:**

There is no free speech provided under the Indian Constitution which permits an individual to argue that the country can be broken into pieces. Sovereignty and national security are constitutionally provided restrictions to free speech under Article 19(2) of the Constitution.

**The GST**

The GST has been a disaster, alleges India's Opposition.

**Truth:**

All Opposition parties have supported the GST Constitutional Amendment and the legislations under it. It was a part of their manifesto. They failed to implement it when they were in power. Finance Ministers' belonging to Governments run by opposition parties are a signatory to every decision on tariffs. All GST Council decisions are unanimously taken. The GST has simplified India's complex taxation structure. There is one tax. There are no barriers; there are no inspectors. Small businesses upto rupees forty lakhs are tax exempted. Those with a turnover of rupees one and a half crores can compound their tax by paying at one percent. Collections have gone up and the rate of taxes are brought down in favour of the citizen at almost every meeting.

**Demonetisation was a failure**

The Opposition alleges that demonetisation was a failure which caused tremendous hardship to the poor people.

**Truth:**

Demonetisation caused hard sleep only on the holders of black money. Demonetisation helped in formalising the economy. It compelled anonymous owners of cash to deposit the money in the bank and account for the same pay taxes. It helped in formalising India's economy, increasing India's tax base. It hastened the digitisation of the Indian economy. India today collects more taxes at lower rates and uses them for the benefit of the poor.

**Nirav Modi**

The Opposition alleges that Nirav Modi was helped by this Government.

**Truth:**

Nirav Modi started defrauding the banks in 2011 when the UPA was in power. His crime was detected in 2018 by the present Government and its agencies. All his assets have been frozen, criminal cases filed for prosecution and extradition proceedings launched against him.

Some assets are being auctioned. It is only a matter of time before India get him to face the consequences in India. Nobody who frauds India can escape.

### **Vijay Mallaya**

The Opposition alleged that the Government helped Vijay Mallaya.

#### **Truth:**

Vijay Mallaya and his company were given loans when the UPA was in power. In fact, banks were directed in 2010 to give a second restructuring of the NPAs of Vijay Mallaya. There is documentary evidence which confirms this. It was on the strength of this restructuring that he got his account regularised and eventually did not pay the bankers. He escaped. No steps against him were taken by the UPA. The NDA have filed civil and criminal litigation against him and succeeded in the extradition proceedings. An appeal against the extradition order is now being heard in the United Kingdom.

### **Pulwama and Balakot**

The Opposition alleges that the Government is politicising terrorist strike at Pulwama and the Indian Air Force strikes at Balakot in Pakistan wherein the JeM camps were liquidated. These are being used for a political advantage. The Opposition demands that evidence of what happened at Balakot should be placed in the public domain.

#### **Truth:**

Our security forces have liquidated innumerable terrorists in the recent months. The terrorists, however, managed to strike at Pulwama. Our security forces liquidated the terrorists within days. On receiving information that a very large terrorist camp was being operated at Balakot in Pakistan, the Prime Minister directed, the Indian Air Force to strike at the camp. The Indian Air Force did a commendable job. It was a perfect exercise. They liquidated the terrorists and the camps. The resisted the counter-attack on the following day by the Pakistan Air Force by pulling down an F-16. The Air Force Chief has confirmed this. Independent satellites quoted by various Indian media organisations conclusively establish the damage done by the strikes. The Indian Armed Forces are extremely professional. They consider it not in the interest of national security and military discipline that the details of military operations should be placed in public domain.

### **The Special Status for Andhra Pradesh**

The Opposition, particularly TDP alleges that the Government has denied a 'Special Status' to Andhra Pradesh as promised.

#### **Truth:**

The Fourteenth Finance Commission re-categorised the States. Such re-categorisation does not permit a special status. The Finance Commission Report, which has been accepted, has a constitutional mandate. The Government, therefore, found a way out by which an amount equivalent to what would have been paid under the Special Status would be given to the State

of Andhra Pradesh as a Special Package.. The Andhra Pradesh Government thanked the Central Government and welcomed the proposal. Thereafter, it reversed its stand for political reasons. Shri Chandrababu Naidu and the TDP need to answer as to why they accepted the Special Package in lieu of Special Status, thanked the Central Government for it and then reversed their stand?

### **Institutions**

The Opposition alleges that institutions are under threat from the Central Government.

#### **Truth:**

The real facts are absolutely to the contrary. It is the Opposition which has been indulging in a mass-intimidation of the judiciary. They even brought an impeachment motion against the erstwhile Chief Justice of India. They put pressure on Judges by threatening to walk out of courts alongwith their allies and lawyer fellow travellers. They intimidate Judges who are not willing to decide in their favour. While the Government and the ruling party have fully respected the Election Commission, it is the Opposition which raised allegations against them. They question the dates on which polling is to be held. They induce communalism on the dates fixed for campaign by invoking the Ramzan argument. They intimidate those media organisations and channels who do not toe their line. Recently, the RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav wrote a letter to Rahul Gandhi suggesting that till elections Opposition parties must boycott electronic media channels.

### **Economy**

The Opposition alleges that Indian economy is in a disastrous situation and jobs are not being created.

#### **Truth:**

India is the fastest growing economy in the world. The average GDP rate of growth in the past five years is about 7.3 per cent. This is the highest ever five year rate of growth in India. Certainly, the fastest growing economy in the world cannot be in a mess. Our macro-economic data is the most prudent ever. Our fiscal deficit and Current Account Deficit are under control. Our foreign exchange reserves are extremely high. Our revenues have grown exponentially. Inflation is under control.

If over a period of five years an economy grows at a rapid pace, its multiplier effect on jobs is very large. The recently released report of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and the data of the Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) clearly indicates the number of jobs being added, both in the formal and informal sectors. The sixteen crore Mudra loans given have helped the informal sector to grow significantly. There is no social unrest in the

country. A high growth and job loss can occur only if productivity levels improve significantly. That does not appear to be the case.

Each one of the above is a fake issue. If fake issues are taken out of Rahul Gandhi's speech, nothing will perhaps be left. The Opposition is in pathetic state. It has to manufacture fake issues against the Government since the real ones don't exist. The Opposition underestimates the wisdom of the electorate. I am confident that the electorate will respond to India's Opposition parties and show them their place.