

The Opposition's 'Caravan' Achieves a New Low – From Falsehood to Forgery

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From truth to rumours

Conventional print media followed conservative norms. Every 'news' that a reporter brought was checked and verified. Due care and caution was taken. Documents were perused, alternative versions were taken and then a 'news' which cast aspersions against individuals, was published. Television liberalised this conventional view. The race for TRPs has led to every news becoming a 'Breaking News.' There is today a complete breakdown of 'Breaking News.' The social media has discarded these norms altogether. For many in social media, this rule has been abandoned. They believe that the norms have become anachronistic. Defamation is a right and the 'targets' reputation is irrelevant. If the right to publish is a part of free speech, equally the right to live with honour and reputation is an essential ingredient of the Right to Life. Both are Fundamental Rights. One cannot override the other.

Experiments with falsehood

An experiment with falsehood was attempted in the Godhra train burning case. A 'fire from within' theory was created. In the Ishrat Jahan case, a successful operation against Lashkar-e-Taiba module mastermind by the intelligence and security agencies was passed on as a political operation. These were the precedents that 'caravans' of modern day falsehood seek to follow. They now get ample support from 'falsehood perpetrators' from the 'Liars on the Wires' and the digital. Their bread and butter depends on falsehood. The campaign in the Vijay Mallya and Nirav Modi cases, Rafale and the non-existent loan waivers are prime examples of this in recent days. I was personally saddened when a media organisation which had come out with distinction in Bofors investigations, became a perpetrator of the Rafale falsehood.

From falsehood to forgery

It is evident from media reports that politicians, amongst others, who stocked and distributed unauthorised cash have also been targeted in the campaign against black money. Media had reported that it was a search on a Congress leader which has found detailed notings in his diary. The diary, amongst others, entails the payments made to members of the preferred family of the Congress Party. A search on another Congress leader at multiple places made significant revelations. Media reports indicate that his informal accounts dealing with cash were discovered. During the search, as per CBDT statement, photocopies of loose sheets were provided by the Congress leader claiming this to be BSY's diary. The authorities, as per the statement of the CBDT, go to the root of the matter. BSY played it fair and straight. He offered his handwriting and signatures to the authorities for verification. The Congress leader started distancing himself from the documents. He would not authenticate nor confirm its veracity and not part with the original. The documents appear to be a self-serving forgery of the Congress Party and its leader. Faced with odds on a daily basis, the Congress Party needed to distract from the self-goal created by Sam Pitroda. He had questioned the Air

Force's targeted attack at Balakot. The 'caravan' of falsehood was ready for a 'Rahul Bailout'.

The forged and fabricated photocopies manufactured and provided by the Congress Party were passed off as BSY's diary. A channel which claims to have earned the 'trust with viewers' endorsed the falsehood. The newspaper which earned credibility with Bofors and lost it with Rafale, headlined the forgeries. Earlier it had sliced and half printed a Rafale document.

Falsehood and forgeries can never influence a poll. Just as voters are wiser than politicians, they are also wiser than those who ride on the 'caravan' of falsehood and forgeries.